

THE
LETTERS

OF

MADAM DE MAINTENON;

AND OTHER

EMINENT PERSONS

IN THE

AGE of LEWIS XIV.

To which are added,

SOME CHARACTERS.

Translated from the FRENCH.

L O N D O N :

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MDCCLIII.

P R E F A C E

TO THE

French Edition.

I shall take up little of the Reader's Time in proving the Authenticity of these Letters: Whoever peruses them, will find the Marks of Genius too strong in them, to leave the least room to doubt of it.

There is less Humour, less Levity, and less Wit in them, than in the Letters of Seneca; but the Style is as

natural,

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natural; they are withal more interesting; abound with stronger Sense; and Madam de *Maintenon* will from henceforth be ranked among the best Writers of the Age of *Lewis XIV.*

I have put it out of my own Power to say from what Hand I received these Letters, by a Promise not to reveal it. Why Secrecy should be required I am ignorant, for I can see nothing in them either to prejudice or displease any one: But, Secrecy has been enjoined, and it was my Business to acquiesce in it.

Mankind have hitherto been divided in their Opinions of Madam de *Maintenon*. Some have looked upon her as a designing Coquette; others have taken her for a Woman of pre-
cise

cise affected Piety. But I can't think that these Characters will be found in her Letters. Some may say, that she was a Person of an unsettled Mind, whilst others maintain she owed her Elevation rather to Chance, than to her own good Sense and Virtue. The Coxcomb will assert that she was but a narrow Genius: The pensive Man will look upon her great Piety as only a political *Finesse*, and fancy he can deduce Proofs of Dissimulation from her devout and mystical Stile.

For my Part, who esteem nothing but what appears worthy of Esteem, I must admire Madam *de Maintenon*, leaving more forward Wits to pry into her Heart, and pass Judgment on it. Her Character is too conspicuous in these artless Billets, wrote to Persons
with

with whom she had no occasion for political Fetches, not to prevail at length over the Malignity of the human Heart.

Let those who may doubt of her superior Genius, reflect on her Fortune. It is impossible to soar so high without Wings; nor can any maintain themselves in such a Flight, without Efforts and without Vigour.

It is true Madam *de Maintenon* was devout, perhaps more so than was proper at *Versailles*: But how many fine Qualities must she not have had! since at Court whilst some imitated her Piety, the rest seemed to excuse her in the Exercise of it.

These

The Publication of these Letters cannot prove entirely useless; they will at least shew that sublime political Schemes are not incompatible with a Relish for the sublimest Devotion, and that it is very possible to love at the same Time *St. Theresa* and *Tacitus*.

Those who look for Intrigue, may spare themselves the Trouble of reading these Letters. The Elevation of *Madam de Maintenon* had nothing in it but what was lawful and natural: And she was accordingly the Wonder of the Age she lived in.

In this Collection are inserted several Letters wrote to her; not with a View to swell the Bulk of the Volume, but
solely

solely to add to the Pleasure of the Reader. I am not certain whether every one of them may be placed in exact Order of Time.

LET-

LETTERS

OF

Madame DE MAINTENON.

LETTER I.

To Mademoiselle De St. Hermant.

From *Niort*, ———, 1650.

YOU write to me, Madam, in too flattering a Strain, and treat me, almost, as if I were not of your own Sex.

There's more Flattery in your Encomiums on me, than in those of Monsieur *De M——* : He praises me more passionately, but less tenderly than you do : And indeed I should be sly of a Lover that could find a Way to my Heart with the same Address as you get Admittance to it. I shouldn't regret *Paris*, were you not there : You eclipse every Thing that pleases me in that City. I shall never forget the Tears you have shed with me ; every Time I think of

B

it,

it, I weep again. Every Time I sit down on that Chair of your own working, what new Delight does it afford me! 'Tho' I find myself in the Humour to write to you, I am neither satisfied with my Expressions nor my Thoughts, unless I make use of your Paper and Pens. I beg you would dispense with me from using all the Paper in Letters to you: I have neither Confidence nor Abilities sufficient for such a Task. I promise you Half of it, and you shall have the Remainder when I have as much Wit as Monsieur Scarron. I have a great Affection for Mademoiselle De Nuillan: I beseech you to acquaint her with it, and thank her for the Service she has done me in helping me to such a Friend as yourself, who might give me some Comfort in the Loss of a Mother, were any Thing in this World capable of doing so.

LETTER II.

From Monsieur Scarron to Mademoiselle D'Aubigné.

Madam,

I ALL along suspected, that the little Maid, who came into my Chamber six Month ago in a Gown too short, and fell a-trying, I don't well know for what, had as much Sense as she discovered

discovered in her Looks. The Letter you have wrote to Mademoiselle *De St. Hermant* abounds with so much Wit and Understanding, that I am displeased with mine, for not having soon enough made me sensible of all the Merit of yours. To deal ingenuously with you, I could never have thought, that in the *American* Islands, or among the Nuns of *Niort*, one might learn to write elegant Letters: And I cannot well conceive the Reason why you have taken as much Care to conceal your Wit, as every Body else does to display theirs. Because you are discovered, don't be more shy of writing to me as well as to Mademoiselle *De St. Hermant*. I will muster up all my Skill to return as good a Letter as yours; but you will have the Pleasure to find how far short I fall of you. Such as I am, I shall ever be, &c.

LETTER III.

From the same to the same.

YOU are then ill of the Tertian Ague: If it turns to a Quartan, we shall have a troublesome Guest the whole Winter, for you must not doubt that it will be as great a Plague to me as to you. Pray let me know how many Fits of it we have had already, and what the Phy-

ficians say to it, since you will see them first: It is not a little odd indeed; that you should hear how I do four or five Days before I know it myself. Overwhelm'd as I am with so many Ills, I certainly rely much on my own Strength to bear so great a Share in your Sickness. I know not whether I had not done better, to have been upon my Guard the first Time I saw you: To judge by the Event, I certainly ought to have done so. But then, how unlikely was it, that a young Maid would have discomposed the Mind of an old Batchelor? And who could have ever suspected her of doing me Mischief enough to make me regret my being no longer in a Condition to take Revenge? But, Compliments a part,—I know you are ill, and am ignorant whether they attend you so well as they ought; which Uneasiness mightily increases my Vexation in seeing you as unfortunate as I am useless to you. For,

Whilst you, fair *Iris*, stretch'd at Ease,

Can find Repose whene'er you please,

In Sheets of dirty Hue;

Poor I, your restless love-sick Swain,

Tumble and toss all Night, with Pain,

In dirtier Sheets than you.

And

And all this for loving you more than I was sensible of. Oh, how I love you ! What Folly is it to love so furiously ! It runs continually in my Mind to take a Journey to *Poitou*, and in this sharp Weather too : Is not this downright Madness ? Ah ! return, return, since I am crazy enough to regret absent Beauties. I ought to have known my Case better, and should have considered, that I have Infirmities more than enough, in being maim'd and crippled from Top to Toe, without adding thereto another Distemper, which may be called Impatience to see you. 'Tis a cursed Disease. Don't I very well know how it fares with poor *M——*, because he does not see you so often as he would, though he sees you every Day ? He writes to us about it like one in Despair ; and I'll warrant you he is damned by this Time, not for his being a Heretic, but because he loves you ; which is saying every Thing. You ought, however, to sit down contented with your Conquests ; let Mankind at last enjoy a little Peace.

How can those killing Eyes such Havock make ?
Have Mercy on your Lover, for God's Sake !

You are very happy in not having me to deal with ; I should handle you to good Purpose. You laugh, perhaps, at my Menaces. But let

me tell you, proud Beauty, there is no Want of Men of Resolution in an Affair of public Concernment: They will not let our Sex be killed with Impunity. And now tell me, dear Charmer, are you a Christian? you are a Turk, upon my Honour, I am a good Judge of it; and you are a Turk of the most malicious Cast: Nay, the better Sort of Turks are great Alms-givers; but, from what I know of your Temper you would not do a Kindness for an Empire, no, not even to them that love you. You are then good for nothing, though a Composition of many fine Qualities and good Things. You verify, better than any Body, the Proverb, *all that glitters is not Gold*: And, in fine, you are as devilishly mischievous as fair. But, for all that, (such is the Power of Beauty) I am, more than any Person living,

Your's, &c.

LETTER IV.

From the same to the same.

HOW touchy and peevish you are! And if you had not many other good Qualities, what Plagues must I endure in cultivating the Friendship which I eagerly desire to link with you! Well then, when once I break my Word with

with you, you will be sadly disconcerted. I will break it a hundred Times over and over, and yet not love you less. You see, Madam, I have so great an Affection for my Friends, that I am ashamed of it. But I confess there are some little Inconveniences to be met with from me. I am devilish lazy; and, to shew you it is true, mere Sloth hinders me from rummaging my Box for some Verses for you; though I long more to find them, than you can to receive them; and 'tis the utmost I may do, after you have well scolded me. You shall see how patiently I will bear it, and may thence conclude that I am at least fit to bear chiding, if I am fit for nothing else. It is needless for any one to strive to set us at Variance; we can quarrel very well by ourselves, without their having a Hand in it: But then we shall quickly be reconciled; and so fall to it again with redoubled Spite. Adieu. The Devil take me, if I am not your most humble and most obedient Servant.

LETTER V.

From the same to the same.

NOW for it! Here are the Verses, which will shew you, little Tygres, that I had done well, had I been upon my Guard against you.

TO, I R I S.

I.

WHILST I was with you ev'ry Day,
 My Dove, my blooming Fair,
 I view'd your Charms, I heard your Wit,
 Regardless of the Snare.

II.

But from your Sight when once debarr'd,
 What Tortures I endur'd !
 Too fierce, too violent, alas !
 By Reason to be cur'd.

III.

Parting, which ought to give Relief,
 But added to my Pain ;
 For in your Chains still faster link'd,
 I struggled but in vain.

IV.

Obdurate *Iris* ! cruel Fair !
 To kindle such a Flame ;
 To make me burn, consume, and long
 For what I durst not Name.

V.

Should I my Passion once reveal,
 Your Anger 'twould procure ;
 And should I keep the Secret close,
 My Dissolution's sure.
 Luckless Dilemma !--Death--or your Disdain.--
 With Patience die, rather than live in Pain.

M. De

M. De Mioffens is ill of the Gout: It's very plain he loves you. Love me, and I shall be cured of all my Disorders.

LETTER VI.

From the same to the same.

Madam,

I SEND you my Confession, though I stand before all the World in a penitent Posture; there is no Soul living I can trust more than yourself: To you my Heart lies quite open.

Iris, your Eyes have pierc'd me through,
And I love you, and only you,

You only I adore;
And, lovely *Iris*, when you hear,
That I address another Fair,

Then never see me more.

This is swearing by the River *Styx*: And can I, my Charmer, bind myself to you by too sacred an Oath? Nay more,

The V O W.

By Styx! I love you, and 'tis true:—

Alas! that heath'nish Oath won't do;

Then mind my Christian Vow, my Dear,

By Heav'ns, I'll ever prove sincere!

Tho' you should frown, and prove unkind,

Yet will I never change my Mind.

“This Flame I'm born to; but 'tis you must tell,

“Whether they're *Beams* of *Heav'n*, or *Flames*
of *Hell*.

What the Devil had I to do in that Galley?

Why should I love you, who will never love

me? You will always tell me with that Gaiety

which cuts me to the Heart, that I love you be-

cause you are handsome, and you don't love me

because I am ugly.

Tho' Reason tells me, *Womankind*

Are false, inconstant as the Wind,

And Rocks that *Men* should fly;

Yet *Iris* has such *Airs*, such *Graces*,

And so divinely fair her Face is,

For *her* I'd freely die.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

From Madam Scarron to Mademoiselle
De Lenclos.*

Mademoiselle,

HERE are some Verses which M. Scarron has made for you, after having tried in vain to make some against you. I would not suffer him to send them to you, and told him (by which you see how much I rely on you) that they would be more acceptable from my Hand than from his.

All your Friends long for your Return. Ever since your Absence my Court is more numerous; but it is a poor Amends to them: They chat and play, drink and yawn. The Marquis seems as heavy and melancholy as he was the first Day after your Departure; he cannot inure himself to your Absence; 'tis an heroic Constancy.

Return, my most Amiable; all Paris begs it of you. If M. De Villarceaux knew all the Reports that Madam De Fiesque spreads against him, he would be ashamed of detaining you longer. Saint Evremond talks of sending Chatillon, Miossens and Rincy, in Quality of Knights-errant, in order to storm your old Castle and carry you off. Return, fair Ninon, and bring back to us the Graces with all their Train of Pleasures. These are my hearty Wishes, and those of Mr. Scarron follow.

The

* Ninon de Lenclos, born at Paris the 15th of May, 1616, died the 17th of October, 1706.

The W I S H.

I.

My lovely *Nanno*, beauteous Maid,
Whose Orders are at Court obey'd
By all the fluttering Beaux :
Such are thy Charms, and such thy Wit,
That *all* admiring, silent sit,
Nor durst thy Pow'r oppose !

II.

When 'tis the *Birth-day* of the Year,
What *Present* shall I bring my Fair,
To equal her Desert ?
Freely I'll give her all my Store ;
(Where is the Courtier can do more ?)
The *Wishes* of my Heart.

III.

Well then, whene'er 'tis *Nanno's* Fate,
To change her present Virgin-state,
And yield at length to Love ;
May the triumphant happy Swain,
Who shall that matchless *Prize* obtain,
The best of *Bridegrooms* prove !

IV.

May he be ever true and kind,
Perfect in Body and in Mind,
May he have Gold in store !
May Peace and Plenty ever reign !
May all the World caress the Swain,
And *Nanno's* Charms adore !

These, Madam, are the sincere Wishes of
your most affectionate Admirer,

POOR SCARRON.

LETTER VIII.

*To Madam De Fontenay.**Paris, Feb. 14, 1653.*

* * * * *
 * * * * * He will never forgive
 it you, said he, with a Tone and an Air which
 I never perceived in him before. You have
 wounded him in the most sensible Part; you
 have deceived his Confidence : In short, he gives
 a Loose to Passion, which I could not have
 thought him capable of. Write to him, tell
 him the Causes of your Discontent; tell him
 every Thing boldly, and I will watch the lucky
 Moment. It would be a great Affliction to me
 to be deprived of the Correspondence of a Person
 I love so dearly. Neither be discouraged, nor
 give Way to him : In two Days, I'll engage,
 your Peace shall be made. In the main you
 have been guilty of a Piece of Imprudence only,
 and his Heart is inclined to clear you. My
 Husband is surprized at so sudden a Rupture :
 He pretends, that instead of being alarmed, you
 ought to thank Heaven for it.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

*To Madam De Palaifeau. ***Paris, 1654.*

I HAVE told *Souvré* all that you would have told him yourself. I doubt his Success; however, be assured that he will attempt Impossibilities; he has promised me as much. He allows his Friend's Behaviour to be base, but he maintains that his Faults are lessen'd by your Haughtiness. The Affair is without Remedy; all he can do is to prevail on him to double the Sum. With this you might be happy, if you knew how to be so: Reputation may be regained. Give yourself up to God; at least retire some time from the World; you may afterwards appear in it again, as if this Accident had never made any Noise. You have always loved Virtue; when the World shall be persuaded of this, which may be done by your Retirement,

* *Celeste de Palaifeau*, Priores of *Argenteuil*. *Scarron* had a great Affection for her in his Youth, and she proved a Jilt to him. Being deceived by a Gentleman, who had promised to marry her, she came back to her first Lover, who then had no Regard for her, but assisted her as if he had still loved her. It is remarkable, that though she had an annual Income of 4000 Livres, she could not avoid being starved to Death.

they

they will forget your Frailties. Mr. Scarron, who forms a right Judgment of Things when he considers them seriously, is of my Opinion. Apply to some honest, pious Man, that may lead you into the right Way. All is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit; you must know it by Experience. Throw yourself into the Arms of God: He is the only Being of whom we are never tired, nor does he ever cast off those that love him.

LETTER X.

To Madam De Pommereuil.

Paris, July 10, 1655.

Madam,

I BELIEVE the whole World cannot produce an Instance of so refined a Passion, as that which Mr. Scarron has conceived for you, since he had the Honour to see you at his Bed's Head. He finds no Body so beautiful as you, not even Madam De Longueville: To you he gives the Prize of Beauty, the Prize of Wit, the Prize of Virtue. You, Madam, are the only Person whose Name he pronounces with Respect. For your Sake he has forgot the fair Unknown, and pardon'd Madaillan. Madam De Brienne is jealous of you, and so is Madam De Fiesque;

judge then how jealous I ought to be. I shall not thank you for that magnificent * *Chasuble*; 'tis a Present from too formidable a Rival: If I would be advised by my Friends, I should get you deprived of the Prayers of the Church, and forbid the Priest of M. *Deffandes Payen* to remember his Benefactress. Madam *De Bonneau* is just returning home from a Visit she made me: She is so much your Friend, and declares it so chearfully and zealously, that I should be ashamed if I did not love you as much as she does.

LETTER XI.

To Madam Fouquet.

Paris, May 25, 1658.

Madam,

I WILL no more importune you about the Affair of the Unloaders; it is happily terminated by the Protection of that Hero, to whom we owe all Things, and whom you have the Pleasure of loving. The Provost of the Merchants listen'd to Reason, as soon as he heard the great Name of *Fouquet*. I beseech you, Madam, to approve of my coming to thank you for it at *Vaux*. Madam *De Vassé* has assured me

* A Vestment worn by Priests at Mass.

you

you continue your Kindnesses to me, and that you would not think me one too many in those Walks and Arbours, where the Company think so solidly, and amuse themselves so agreeably.

LETTER XII.

To the same.

Paris, Sept. 4, 1659.

Madam,

THE Loss you have just met with, becomes a public one by the Share the Court and City take in it. If any Thing could alleviate your Grief, it would doubtless be the Proof this Event gives you of the Esteem which all *France* has for you and the Superintendant of the Finances. The Nation could not have wept more for the Death of the Duke of *Anjou*. As for me, who am your Debtor on so many Accounts, I have much more need of Consolation than I have Capacity to give any. I loved that Child with infinite Tenderness; I had read in his Looks a Felicity and Glory which God has not suffered him to arrive at. His holy Name be praised: Heaven has snatch'd him from you, Madam, but it is only to make him happier.

LETTER XIX.

*To the same.**Paris, January 18, 1660.**Madam,*

THE Obligations you have laid me under have not permitted me to hesitate about the Proposal Madam *De Bonneau* has made me in your Name: It is so honourable for me, I am so weary of my present Situation, and have so great a Veneration for you, that I would not have demurr'd a Moment, even though the Gratitude I owe you had been silent in the Case. But Mons. *Scarron*, though your Debtor and most humble Servant, cannot consent to it. My Instances have not softened him, nor my Reasons persuaded him. He conjures you to love me less, or give me Proofs of it that may be less grating to his Affection for me. Read his Petition, Madam, and forgive the Vivacity of it in a Husband who has no other Preservative against Melancholy, no other Comfort in all his Afflictions and Infirmities than his beloved Wife. I told Madam *Bonneau*, that if you would shorten the Term, I might perhaps gain his Consent; but I now plainly see it is in vain to flatter myself so far, and that I presumed too much

much on my Power. I beseech you, Madam, continue me your Protection: Nobody is more devoted to you than I am; and my Gratitude will end but with my Life.

LETTER XIV.

*To Madam de Villarceaux.**

I Don't undertake to give you a Relation of the King's Entry: I shall only tell you that it's impossible to make you conceive the Magnificence of it. I think nothing could exceed it; and the Queen must needs have gone to Bed sufficiently contented with the Husband she has chosen. The Cardinal's Household was not the worst Part of the Sight: It began with seventy-two † Mules; the first 24 were simply enough caparison'd; the second 24 made a better Figure; and the rest had Trappings of red Velvet embroidered with Gold, with Silver Bits and Bells. Next came 24 Pages, and the Gentlemen and

* Wife of Louis de Mornay, Marquis of Villarceaux, was a Lady of great Sense, excessively jealous of her Husband, the most amiable and most unfaithful Man of his Time.

† In the Posthumous Works of *La Fontaine* we find a Letter to M. Fouquet on this Entry, wrote half in Prose and half in Verse, in which his Eminency's Mules are often mentioned.

Officers

Officers of his Household; and after them 12 Coaches and his Guards: In fine, the Cardinals Household were above an Hour passing by. That of † *Monsieur* came next. I forgot to tell you, that among the Cardinal's Household there were 24 led Horses, adorned with such magnificent Trappings, that I could not take my Eyes from them. Monsieur's Household must, then, have made but a very poor Figure; and some say there was a Design in this; it was done in order to expose the excessive Opulence of the Cardinal: And this the Count *d'Estrées* calls a fastidious Simplicity. The King's Household was truly Royal; the Pages of the great and little Stables dextrously managing their Horses; the Mousquetaires, whose several Brigades were distinguished by different Feathers in their Hats; the Pages of the Bed Chamber in Velvet embroidered with Gold; *M. de Noailles* at the Head of the Light Horse; *Vardes* at the Head of the Hundred *Swiss*. Then——no——the Lords of the Court followed the Light Horse: There were so many of them, and all made so grand a Figure, that it was impossible to give the Preference to any one. I looked for my Friends among them: *Beuvron* passed by first, and looked about for me, but his

† The King's Brother, so called, without any other Title.

Eyes

Eyes did not meet mine. I watched for M. *de Villarceaux*, but he was mounted on so fiery a Steed, that he had got 20 Yards beyond me before I spied him: He was one of the least magnificent, but most gallantly dressed; his brown Head was conspicuous, and great Notice was taken of him by the Spectators. All these Noblemen stopt to bow at the Balcony of the Abbé *d'Aumont*: You know who was there. The Count *de Guiche*, adorned with Jewels sparkling in the Sun, surrounded with splendid Liveries, and followed by several Officers of the Guards, went up into the Balcony, where, as you may judge, his Figure was not disliked, for he was admirably well dressed. The Marshals of France preceded the King, before whom a Brocade Canopy was carried.—(*Part of the MS. is torn here.*)—With surprising Grace and Majesty appeared the Chancellor, surrounded with Pages dressed in violet-coloured Sattin laced with Silver, and Feathers in their Hats. It is hard to say what made the finest Appearance in this Procession; were I to dispose of the Prize, I should give it to the * Horse that carried the Seals. *La Feuillade* affected a Singularity that

* *La Fontaine* says in his Letter to M. *Fouquet*,

*Nor the Seals-Casket proudly borne on Back
Of Beast justly nick-nam'd Chancellor-Hack.*

did

did not answer his Expectations: He wore black Ribbands and black Feathers. The Chevalier de Grammont, Rouville, Bellefonds, and some others, followed the Cardinal's Household; every Body was surprized at it: Some say they did it out of Flattery, and 'tis probable there may be some Truth in this Assertion. The Presidents à Mortier look'd ridiculous enough with their Mortar Caps, which at a Distance one might have taken for Sweetmeat-Boxes. Next Sunday a Firework is to be played off on the River. They talk of nothing but Diversions and Pleasures. For my Part, I have none greater than when I am giving you, Madam, Proofs of my Respect, &c.

LETTER XV.

To Madam d'Albret, Wife of the Marshal of that Name.

From the † Hospitalieres in St. James's Street, 1660.

Madam,

I HAVE a most grateful Sense of the Service you have done me, and am the more charmed with your Manner of proceeding, as

† A Monastery of Nuns.

you

you have granted me your Protection without having first promised it. There is something so noble in the Action, that you may from thence judge of my lively Gratitude and profound Respect. From henceforth then I may labour quietly in the Business of my Salvation. I have indeed promised God to give the fourth Part of my Pension to the Poor. These 500 Livres more than Mr. Scarron had, are in Justice due to them, were it only to atone for your Friend's officious Lie.

LETTER XVI.

To Mr. de Hermilli.

From St. Germain, Sept. 18, 1664.

WE have made a Vow, dear Cousin, to spend Part of the Autumn here; you must therefore make your Vintage without us: Believe me, nothing but so strong a Resolution as that which we have taken, could have made us refuse your Offers. We lead a very uniform, yet pleasant Life here. Madam de Fiesque, Beuvron, Mademoiselle de Pralin, and Coulanges, give us every Evening a little Concert. The Abbé makes Verses, or reads such as come to us from *Paris*. We have the Morning to ourselves, and the rest of the Day we dedicate

dedicate to Play, Conversation and Music. At *St. Germain* there is nothing but Pleasure; at *Paris* they do nothing but mope or sleep. Here the Days are more serene, the Air purer, the Zephyrs milder. Adieu, dear Cousin, I wish you a good Vintage.

LETTER XVII.

To the Duchess de Richelieu.

Feb. 20, 1666.

I MOST heartily thank you, Madam, for the Retreat you offer me; but am now very averse to removing from *St. James's-Street*: Nothing but a recluse Life can suit me in the Condition to which I am reduced by the Death of the Queen Dowager. I will do myself the Honour to wait on you with the Veil, such as you have bespoke it. My Mourning is very different from that of the Court: I have my Benefactress, my Traquility and my Happiness to weep for. Have you read the Sonnet which the Abbé has made on the Queen's Death? 'Tis the finest Piece of the Kind. The Abbé must certainly be a Lover of Virtue since he praises it so well.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

*To the same.**March 3, 1666.**Madam,*

I SWEAR in the Presence of God, that could I have foreseen the Queen's Death, I would not have accepted of that Match : I should have loved my Liberty much more, and respected my Indigence. My Friends are very cruel, they blame me for having rejected the Offers of a *Man of Birth and Fortune* indeed, but void of *Sense and Manners*. I have urged on this Subject to the Marshal's Lady, all the strongest and most sensible Arguments I could muster up ; yet she condemns me, and says I am the Author of my Misfortunes. 'Tis true I should not now be regretting the Loss of the Pension that supported me ; but God will make Amends for it ; and I should be lamenting the Loss of my Solitude, my Liberty, my Repose ; Blessings which God could not restore to me without a Miracle. If the Refusal was yet to be made, I would do it again, notwithstanding the extreme Poverty by which Heaven is pleased to try me : I have well consulted my Heart ; I have viewed, considered, and weighed every Thing : And I am

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not

not guilty, Madam, but unfortunate ; and that is indeed sufficient.

LETTER XIX.

To Mademoiselle de Lenclos.

March 8, 1666.

YOUR Approbation comforts me for the Cruelty of my Friends: In my present Condition I cannot too often repeat to myself, that you approve of the Courage I have had to make it such. At the Royal Square they blame me, at *St. Germain* they commend me, but no where do they think of pitying, or serving me. What think you of the Comparison they have dared to make to me between that Man and *Mr. Scarron*? O Heavens! what a Difference! The latter, without Wealth, without the Pleasures of Life, brought good Company about me; the other would have hated them and made them keep their distance. *Mr. Scarron* had that Facetiousness of Temper, which all the World know, and that solid Sense, which scarce any Body perceived in him: This other is neither sprightly, humorous, nor solid; if he talks, he makes himself ridiculous. My Husband was excellent upon the whole; I had corrected his too great Freedoms; he was neither mad nor vicious: His Probity would stand any Test, his Disinterestedness

terestedness was not to be matched. C— loves nothing but Pleasure, and has the Esteem of none but profligate Youths, the Prey of Women, the Dupe of his Acquaintance, haughty, choleric, avaritious and prodigal; at least I thought I saw all these Qualities in him. I congratulate you for not having received him, notwithstanding the Recommendations of *La Châtre*; You could not have made him sensible that the first Visit ought to be the last. Assure those who attribute my Refusal to an Engagement, that my Heart is perfectly free, will always be free: I have too much experienced, that the happiest Marriage cannot be delectable, and I find Liberty delightful. Pray, make my Compliments to M. *de la Rochefoucault*, and tell him that the Book of *Job* and the Book of *Maxims* are the only things I read. You shall not be thanked, since you will not receive Thanks, but Gratitude is no Loser by the Silence you injoin me. How many things do I owe you, my most amiable Friend, and how pleasing it is to be your Debtor!

L E T T E R XX.

*To Madam De Chantelou.**Passy, April 28.*

YOU see, Madam, how far I am from the predicted Grandeur: I submit to Providence; and, indeed, what would it avail me to murmur against the Almighty? My Friends have advised me to apply to M. * * *, as if they had forgot the Reasons I have not to expect any thing from him. Shall I go to win him again by my Submissions, and sue for the Honour of being his Pensioner? I have been sent to M. *Colbert*, but to no Purpose. I have got two Petitions presented to the King, in which the *Abbé Testu* exhausted his Rhetoric, and they have not even been read. Oh! were it my Fate to be in high Favour, how differently should I treat the Unfortunate! How little are Men to be depended on! When I wanted nothing, I might have obtained a Bishoprick; and now that I am in Want of all Things, every thing is denied me. Madam *de Chalais* * has offered me her Protection and Interest, but from the Teeth outwards: Madam *de Lyonne* said to me, *I will see about it, I will speak*—in the very Tone that

• Afterwards Princess *des Ursins*.

means

means the contrary. Every body has offered me Services, no body has done me any. The Duke has no Interest at Court, the Marshal is begging for himself: In short, Madam, it is very certain that my Pension will not be restored. I believe God calls me to him by these Trials: He calls his Children by Adversities. Let him call me; I will follow him through the austere Rules: I am as tired of the World, as the Courtiers can be of me. I thank you, Madam, for the Christian Consolations you offer me, and for the Kindness which my Brother tells me you shew him.

L E T T E R X X I.

To Mademoiselle d' Artigni.

Paris, June 30, 1666.

IF all that the *Portugueze* Ambassador's Lady relates to me concerning *Donna Almera* is true, I shall have no Reason to regret either *Poitu* or *Paris*. That Princess is rich, generous and beneficent: She was educated here, and loves every thing that comes from hence: She is not upon ill Terms at Court, and her Children are amiable and good natured. The *Portugueze* are excessively polite, very ingenious, and magnificent. At *Lisbon* there is more good Com-

pany than we commonly imagine; and the Heat there is not excessive: In short, they promise me I shall find every Kind of Satisfaction and Delight. Now, what do I leave behind me here? Friends to whom I am a Burthen, People that don't know how to respect the Unfortunate. The Marshal *d'Albret* is the only one I have left: But Things are much altered; he was formerly my Friend, now he is my Protector. He has been so good as to make Interest for me with Madam *de Montespan*: Pray, manage Matters so as to procure me the Honour of being presented to her when I go to return you my Thanks and take Leave of you, that I may not reproach myself with having quitted *France* without seeing the Wonder of it.

L E T T E R XXII.

To Madam de Chantelou.

Paris, July 11, 1666.

'TIS determined, Madam, that I shall not go to *Portugal*. A few Days ago Madam *Thiange* introduced me to her Sister, and told her that I was to set out immediately for *Lisbon*. ' For *Lisbon*, cry'd she? But that's a very remote Place: My dear Child, you must stay here; *Albret* has spoke to me about you, and
' acquainted

‘acquainted me with your Merit.’ He had done much better, said I to myself, had he told her my wretched Condition. I described it to her, but with some Dignity; and she gave me an attentive Hearing, though at her Toilet. I told her my Pension was cut off; that I had in vain solicited *M. Colbert*; that my Friends had, with no better Success, presented Petitions to the King; that I was obliged to seek a decent Subsistence Abroad; that the Length of the Voyage did not frighten me, having in my Infancy made one to *America*: In fine, *Madam de la Fayette* herself would have been satisfied with the * Truth of my Expressions and the Brevity of my Story. *Madam de Montespan* seemed affected with it, and desired me to enlarge upon it in a Memorial which she engaged to present to the King. I thanked her in the most affectionate Terms; drew up my Petition in haste, and was as well pleased with it, as if our Abbé had embellished it with some of his own Thoughts. I got it delivered by the kind Lady. The King, as I am told, received it graciously; perhaps the Hand that presented it procured it a favourable Reception. *M. de Villeroi* joined her in the Application: He is almost the only Man of my Acquaintance whom I did not solicit to serve me, and the only one who has served me.

* A favourite Phrase of that Lady’s.

In short, my Pension is restored, and on the same Footing as the late Queen had granted it. Two thousand Livres is a Sum more than sufficient for my Solitude and my Salvation. At my rising I found a Billet from M. *d'Albret*, acquainting me with this News, and that too by express Order. I think that to impart the same to you, is the best Answer I can make to your Farwell-Letter. To-morrow I shall wait upon Madam *de Montespan* and M. *de Villeroi* with my Thanks.

L E T T E R XXIII.

To Mademoiselle de Lenclos.

Paris, July 18, 1666.

THE Marshal *d'Albret* has always been my Friend, I don't know he ever was my Lover: An extreme Delicacy of Spirit, fair *Ninon*, is the Consequence of having served you. I see him every Day, and you know one may see him safely. You complain of his Absence: I am too faithful in Friendship, to afford you room to lay the Blame upon me. Come and sup with me this Evening, and prepare to do your worst. Madam *de Fiesque* and Madam *de Coulanges* have laid their Heads together to put the Marshal in a merry Mood. I expect you,
unless

unless the Marquis prevents it: Bring him along with you, if you don't bring your Lute; but remember that we must have the Lute or the Marquis.

LETTER XXIV.

*To Mademoiselle de Pons.**

Paris, August 2, 1666.

LET me begin with Reproaches, and I will end with Compliments. Madam *d'Aiguillon* has told a Friend of yours of your Marriage with one of the most amiable and the most honest Men at Court: This Affair is public: Every body talks to me of it incessantly. I inquire of all the World about it, while they think I carry on a Farce, and am really in the Secret. I cannot pardon you this Reserve, unless M. *d'Hudicourt* has required it in the Marriage Articles: Nay, I don't know whether you ought to have allowed him to exact it; the Laws of Friendship are sacred. You have been the Depositary of my most secret Thoughts, and I am not better informed than the public, of yours. It is said here, that Madam *de Chalais* managed this Affair; that Madam *de Thiange* prepares for you a present worthy of herself and

* Some time after married to M. *d'Hudicourt*.

of you ; that M. *d'Hudicourt* is as amorous as our Friend was ; that you go to the Altar with the most noble and disinterested Air ; and that the King has in few Words given great Hopes. Is all this true ? I have promised you Compliments ; but you shall have none till you have satisfied me in all these Questions : Friendship dictates them to me ; let Confidence answer them.

LETTER XXV.

To the Abbé Testu.

Paris, November, 15.

DON'T be alarmed, my poor Abbé, at my Devotion ; dispel their Uneasiness at the *Hotel de Richelieu* : In Solitude I don't forget Friends to whom I am indebted for all the Pleasures of it. My Life, you say, needs no Reformation : Father *Bourdaloue* would not talk to me in that Strain. You are now become a Man of this World ; but you will not always be so ; a Day will come, when you will prefer Heaven to Earth : You are made for God. Such as attribute my Retirement to Spleen or Sullenness, doubtless do not know me : Have I ever given room for such Suspicions ? It is the Fruit of serious Reflection. I withdraw from the World, because I have loved and do still love it too much

much. You tell me I may work out my Salvation in it, but you must needs be sensible how hard that is: I highly approve of this Maxim of Father *Joseph*, that to be virtuous in *Paris*, it is not enough that we are *willing to be so*. However, I am not yet for leaving it; too many Engagements keep me here; and, considering my Weakness, I am sensible my Efforts would be fruitless. They told you the Truth, if they described my *Director as a rigid Man: But you ought not to have fancied him ridiculous. He does not forbid innocent Pleasures; but neither will he allow us to call those Pleasures innocent, which are criminal. His Piety is gay, affable, and not fastidious: He does not require a Life wholly mortified; but he contends for a Christian and an active Life. He is an admirable Man. If you please I will send him to you and to *Guebriant*. He begins with Attacks upon the Passions; he conquers them, and in the room of them substitutes contrary Impulses. He has enjoined me to make myself dull in Company, in order to mortify the Passion he perceives in me to render myself agreeable by my Wit: I obey; but finding that I yawn and make others do the same, I am sometimes ready to renounce Devotion.

* The Abbé Gobelín, Doctor of Sorbonne.

L E T T E R XXVI.

Paris, Jan. 3.

I Am sorry, my dear Brother, to have nothing more than Wishes to offer you this Year. I have not yet paid all my Debts, and you are very sensible this is the first Use I ought to make of my Pension. With a little Œconomy you might live comfortably: Your Extravagance cuts me to the very Heart; break off with Pleasures; they always prove much more expensive than the Necessaries of Life. Be nice in the Choice of Friends: Your Fortune and your Salvation depend alike on the first Steps you take at setting out in the World. I speak to you as a Friend; apply yourself to your Duty, love God, be an honest Man, arm yourself with Patience, and you can want for nothing. *Madam de Neuillan* has often given me this Counsel, and hitherto I have found the Benefit of it. Adieu, dear Brother; pardon this short, friendly Sermon: I shall be happy no farther than you are so; and you will be happy according as you are virtuous.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXVII.

*To Madam d'Hudicourt.**Paris, March 14.*

M. *De Vivonne* has already spoke to me: I am very sensibly affected with the Honour intended me; but I own to you that I think myself quite unfit for it. I live quietly; is it proper for me to sacrifice my Repose and my Liberty? Besides, that mysterious Behaviour, that profound Secrecy which they require of me, without positively giving me the Key of it, may induce my Friends to think a Snare is laid for me. However, if the Children belong to the King, I consent to it: I would not, without Scruple, take Charge of *Madam de Montespan's* Children; therefore the King must order me to do it. This is my last Word. I have wrote almost to the same Purpose to *Madam de Thiange*; and 'tis a Precaution inspired by Prudence. I should not have been so nice three Years ago; but I have since learned many Things, which prescribe it to me as a Duty.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXVIII.

*To the same.**Paris, Dec. 24, 1670.*

THE little * one is better; *Martha* gave you a false Alarm: For my part, I never had a Moment's Uneasiness about it, and you know a little Matter is sufficient to make me tremble: The Pains were pretty sharp, but not attended with Convulsions. Make yourself easy then, dear Madam. The Children were yesterday at *Clagny*; the Nurse came in, and I staid in the Anti-Chamber. Whose Children are these? said the King to her. They surely belong, answered she, to the Lady that lives with us; I judge so from the Uneasiness she discovers at the least Thing that ails them. And who do you think is their Father, replied the King? I know not, said the Nurse, but I imagine him to be some Duke, or a President of the Parliament. The † Lady is wonderfully pleased with this Answer, and the King laughed at it till his Eyes watered.

* A Daughter of Madam *de Montespan*.

† Madam *de Montespan*.

L E T T E R XXIX.

*To the Abbé Gobelin.**Paris, March 6, 1671.*

I Have heard you have been sick ; I leave you to judge of my Uneasiness ; I should be inconsolable in losing you. Madam *de Montespan* leads me a sad Life ; the King was an Eye-witness of it Yesterday ; and these Quarrels, together with the continual Ailments of her Children, throw me into such a Condition as I shall not long be able to bear. God be praised for all Things : Forake me not.

L E T T E R XXX.

To Madam des G——.

WHAT you write to me about is no longer a Mystery any where but in the Country. I will tell you the Fact just as I had it from Madam *de N——*. The Lady having confessed to a Priest who refused her Absolution, was extremely chagrined at it, and complained to the King, who, though much surprized, would not condemn that Priest without asking M. *de Montausier*, whose Probity he respects, and M. *Bossuet*, whom he esteems for his Doctrine, what they thought of the Affair. *Bossuet* did not hesitate to say the Priest had done his Duty :
Montausier

Montausier took up the Matter in a rougher manner; upon which *Bossuet* resumed his Argument, spoke so forcibly, and so opportunely brought into Play, Glory and Religion, that the King, who needs no more than to be told the Truth, rose up very much affected, and squeezing the Duke's Hand, said to him, I promise you never to see her more. Hitherto he has kept his Word: The little one sends me Word that her Mistress is inexpressibly enraged: She has seen no body these two Days; she writes from Morning till Night, and at going to Bed tears it all to pieces. I commiserate her Condition: No body pities her, though she has done good to every body. The Queen sent yesterday to inquire about her Health: You see how I am, replied she to the Gentleman; give my hearty Thanks to her Majesty, and tell her, that though at Death's Door, I am still but too well. All the Courtiers are about *Madam de Montausier*. The Question now is, whether the King will set out for *Flanders*, without taking Leave. That Day is a decisive one. It is expected with as much Impatience as I expect Letters from you, with an Account that you have recovered your Health.

L E T.

LETTER XXXI.

June 16.

MADAM *de Montespan* and I have had a very smart Dialogue, and as I am the Party aggrieved, I have wept abundantly: She has given an Account of it to the King in her own Way. I own to you it is with great Reluctance I remain in a Station that exposes me to such Incidents: I could find a great deal of Pleasure in setting myself at Liberty. It has run in my Mind a thousand Times to become a Nun, and the Fear of repenting it has made me slight Impulses which other Women would have taken for real Calls: I long sorely to retire, and the same Fear prevents me. 'Tis a very timorous Prudence, and makes me spend my Life in strange Agitations. I am very sensible I may work out my Salvation here; but I think it might be done with more Safety elsewhere. I cannot think God intends I should suffer by *Madam de Montespan*: She is incapable of Friendship; she paints me to the King in what Colours she pleases, and makes me lose his Esteem: He looks upon me as an odd Temper that one must bear with, a delicate Genius that must be tenderly dealt with, a precise Mortal apt to take Umbrage. I dare not talk to him alone, be-
cause

cause she would never forgive it me ; and even though I should speak to him, my Obligations to *Madam de Montespan* don't permit me to say any thing against her. Thus I can find no Remedy for my Afflictions ; yet Death advances, and Time slips away.

LETTER XXXII.

To the same.

July 19.

I Am still in the same Way of thinking. As I deal sincerely with you, I don't tell you it is in order to serve God better that I would quit the Court ; I think I can secure my Salvation here ; but I don't find we are any where forbid to consult our Repose, and get out of a Station of perpetual Trouble and Vexation. I did not explain my Thoughts clearly, if you understood that I dream'd of being a Nun ; I am too old to change my Condition ; and according to the Fortune I may have, I shall think of settling myself in full Tranquility, if the ill Humours of *Madam de Montespan* continue. In the World all Returns are towards God ; in a Convent all Returns are towards the World. This is my principal Reason ; the Consideration of my Age comes next. They will not give me where-withal to purchase an Estate. I consume away
with

with Vexations and long Watchings; I decay visibly, and am oppressed with the Vapours and Melancholy. I am willing to suffer, and as I have cured my Impatience, and have nothing left but Sorrow to bear, it may be said I have made some Progress. I do what I can to find Comfort in God. I confessed myself yesterday to a Man, who assured me I did not tell him of one Sin. I am sure you would judge otherwise of me.

LETTER XXXIII.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

Versailles, Jan. 15, 1672.

WHether I write to you or not, you ought to be equally persuaded of my Friendship, and of the Care I will take of your Fortune. I love you tenderly, and am persuaded you don't love me less. Thus, my dear Brother, our Fortunes are in common, and they will not be so scanty as they have been in the Beginning. I have spoke to M. *de Louvois*; he will get you a Post in a Regiment. Adieu; neither you nor I are fond of long Letters.

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LETTER XXXIV.

To the same.

I Am very much surprized at hearing nothing concerning you, since the King has done you the Honour to appoint you to command at *Armsdorff*. I shall make no Answer to your Surmize of being on ill Terms with me : You know this can never happen, and that whether I caress you or quarrel with you, I still equally love you, and more too than any thing else in this World. I own that your Establishment is not solid ; but the King has begun to be kind to you ; he will go through with it : *M. de Louvois* will not oppose it. It is very strange you should think I have no longer any Affection for you, because I have reprimanded you ; which is the surest Sign of my Tendernefs.

LETTER XXXV.

To the same.

I Am overjoy'd to see you contented. The greatest Encouragement to do a Kindness is to find the Receivers sensible of it. Therefore think of nothing but to do your Duty well at *Armsdorff* : Leave to me the Care of your Affairs here. I am exceeding glad to hear you keep a Table. Your praying Desk enchants me : I
could

could wish to see you at it, and be an Eye-witness of your Gravity. Be merry, dear Brother, but think of your Salvation.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the same.

I Have received Complaints of your Conduct, which do you no Honour : You use the *Hugonots* ill ; you study the Means to vex them, and seek Occasions to do it : This is unbecoming a Man of Quality. Be merciful to Men that are more unfortunate than criminal : They are attached to Errors, in which we ourselves have been, and which Violence could never have made us forsake. *Henry IV.* professed the same Religion, and so did several great Princes. Do not then molest them : Men must be drawn by the Cords of Lenity and Charity : *Jesus Christ* has set us an Example of it ; and such is the King's Intention. 'Tis your Duty to keep every one within due Obedience : 'Tis the Province of the Bishops and Curates to make Conversions by their Doctrine and Example. Neither God nor the King have committed Souls to your Care. Sanctify your own Soul, and be severe to yourself only. I should be very glad to see you here ; but all in good Time. I have good Hopes, and *M. de Louvois* does Wonders ;
we

we are greatly obliged to him. I repeat it, dear Brother, let not M. * *de Ruigni* ever complain of you again.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the Abbé Gobelin.

LET your Nephew write me such a Letter as I may shew. It must be barely Thanks for having shewn him the Princes at *Verfailles*. Let him praise every thing he has seen, and say something about Education; but all this simply and with Energy. I know the Taste of this Place, and what is fit for them. Madam *de Montespan* is actually treating about a Match for me, which will not be concluded; 'tis a very beggarly Duke: Such a Marriage would be to me a Source of Evils: I have already Afflictions enough in my present Condition, envied by all the World, without going to seek for Vexations in a Station that makes three Fourths of Mankind unhappy. The little † Duke is still very ill; I love this Child not less than the other: There cannot be a greater Weakness than to love excessively a Child who is none of mine, whom I

* Deputy General of the reformed Churches of France; he took Refuge in England, where he was created Earl of Galway.

† Duke of Maine, one of Madam *de Montespan*'s Children.

shall

shall never have at my Disposal, and who will in Process of Time give me a great deal of Trouble. Truly, it is a great Folly to remain in so disagreeable a Station. I conceive how much you regret your conducting me so slowly to God: I do but little Honour to my Confessor: Not that I do more Harm here than at *Paris*; on the contrary, I oftener think of my Salvation. It is true, they are fruitless Thoughts; for the same Humour of running into Extremes, which makes me desire to quit my Place, because I am plagued in it, makes me give over many pious Practices, because I do not order my Life as I could wish. I have not forgot to perform my Devotions to *St. Mary Magdalen*. Give me your Opinion of the *Media Noche*: I am well pleased to be at it with the King, if you judge there is no Harm in it; and if there be any, I shall not hesitate to absent myself for the future. Ye ought to be very scrupulous in your Encomiums on me, as they sooth but too much the Vanity of a Person compounded, as I am, of Vain-Glory and Self-Love.

L E T.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To Madam d'Hudicourt.

THE Marriage you have heard of was proposed, but in a very vague Manner; and that was indeed sufficient. That Man was not made for me; he has neither Fortune nor Merit; so that I had no great Struggle with myself in refusing a Duke. I have thanked Madam *de Montespan*, and ascribed the Cause of my Refusal to my tender Affection for the Princes. I have so firmly persuaded her of it, that I am sure she now repents her having had Recourse to this Means to get rid of me. She does not suspect I saw through her Drift, and loves me the more for it. This Morning she insisted on my giving her my Word that I would not leave her: I have promised her every Thing, and buried in Oblivion all past Bickerings: We embraced each other, and from henceforth we shall live in Peace together: She offered me to sign the Treaty of Reconciliation. It is a great Misfortune to live in a Place where good Faith and Friendship depend on Oaths: We must mould ourselves to every Thing: I have already renounced my Humour, my Taste, and my Pleasures; and I see I must also renounce my Sentiments; but don't fear that I will ever part with those that attach me to you.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Abbé Gobelin.

I BELIEVE Saint *Bernard* is right, and 'tis with Grief I perceive, that to keep clear of criminal Things is not sufficient: If other Matters do not obstruct one's Salvation in so great a Degree, they are, at least, as great Obstructions to the Perfection you want me to arrive at. Your Letter is replete with Devotion and Friendship, the very Things I would have my Life alternately spent in; but I am in a Place where People are Strangers to both. Would to God that my extreme Impatience to forsake it proceeded from heavenly Views, and not from a Disgust for the Person you know. Our Princes are as ill-natured as they can be, and I cannot leave them too soon for the Quiet of my Conscience. Beg of God what is necessary for me.

LETTER XL.

To Madam de Coulanges.

I Return you a thousand Thanks, Madam, for all the kind Things in your Letter concerning me. The two thousand Crowns are more than I deserve, but nothing is too much for my Care and Pains: I spend my best Days in the Service of others; I am always in mortal

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Inquietudes;

Inquietudes ; and you cannot think how much the Vexations incident to my Station have increased the Vivacity of my Temper. I want Rest ; I live in continual Action ; not a Moment to enjoy my Friends. The King's Favours cannot make me Amends for all these Losses. I thank Madam de *Seigné* : Let her know how highly I deserve that she should always love me. The fair *Victoire* is just gone out of my Apartment, very much nettled, I suppose, at not having been able to persuade me to sup this Evening at her Mother's. I should never have a Moment to myself, if I was not always giving Denials. My Servitude will have an End, but alas ! perhaps it will end in another Kind of Servitude. The little * one has retained very well the Verses of Mr. de *Coulanges*, and rehearsed them gracefully : Inquiry was made after the Author of them ; I named him ; it occasioned a Smile ; in this Place nothing escapes Notice.

LETTER XLI.

To the Abbé Gobelin.

THEY have shewn me some Tenderness, but they have not persuaded me, and I cannot lay aside the Project I have formed with you : It presents me with a Prospect extremely agreeable,

* Duke du *Maine*.

and

and whatever kind Usage I may meet with here; I foresee it will be attended with great Mortifications. Lead me where you please; Favour would not be sufficient to detain me; judge then whether the Appearance of it might do it. I am overwhelmed with Melancholy. They murder these poor Infants before my Face, and I am not able to prevent it. My tender Affection for them renders me intolerable to those they belong to; and as I cannot conceal my Thoughts, I incur the Hatred of those with whom I pass my Life, and whom I would not offend, even tho' they were not what they are. Sometimes I resolve to check my Vivacity, and leave those Children to the Management of their Mother: But I should think I offended God, if I thus abandoned them, and betrayed the Confidence their Father has in me: So that, vexed every Day, I daily renew my Care and Attendance, which in increasing my Friendship for them, afford me fresh Mortifications. They who impute to me *M. de Lauzun's* Disgrace, hate me more than they know me. Had my Advice been regarded, he would still have been in Favour, and a great deal of Pains and many false Steps might have been spared. I am indeed sometimes consulted, but the Resolution is previously taken; they don't want me to give my Opinion, they would have me assent to the Advice of others. There

is nothing in my Credit but a Kind of Decency and political Fetch: I am made use of for their own Ends. Pray to God for me, and ask him nothing but my Salvation. I——*—— of the rest.

LETTER XLII.

To the same.

COOOLNESS encreases, and my Friends, you know what Friends, compliment me on my Disgrace. Yesterday I told Madam de Montespan that she had set me at Variance with the King; she gave me nothing but lame Answers; upon which a very smart, yet very decent Dialogue ensued. In the Evening M. de Louvois was sent to me, to make me hear Reason. I discoursed with him, perhaps with too much Sincerity; you know it is impossible for me to speak otherwise: In fine, the Conclusion was, that I should endeavour a Reconciliation. I shall speak to Madam de Montespan with great Calmness and Submission, but still with a firm Resolution to leave her at the Year's End. Let us renounce a Place, where one must act and speak against Conscience.

* This Passage could not be made out in the Manuscript.

LETTER

LETTER XLIII.

To the same.

I RELAPSE into the Disease I had this Winter, which is the Effect of Blood overheated by deep Melancholy. I cannot divert it by any Visits, and am always shut up with the King, Madam de Montespan and the Duke du Maine. God knows the Ground of my Heart, and I hope he will break my Chains. The King has given me an hundred thousand Livres more, so that this makes two hundred thousand. I am content, and my Mind must alter very much, if ever I ask them for a single Penny. There's Wealth enough for the Necessaries of Life: All the rest is nothing but Covetousness that knows no Bounds. Don't mention this new Benefaction to any one. The Count de Vexin is a little better: The Duke du Maine is an Object of Pity; like a Mother I feel all his Ailments; he is under the Hands of the Physicians and Surgeons; one half of them would be sufficient to dispatch him. They heap Riches on me, and kill that poor Child before my Face. They give a Hearing to my Counsels, and take them in good Part, but without the least Intention of ever following them.

LETTER XLIV.

To Madam de St. G——.

YOU want to know, Madam, how I have come by so fine a Present : The simplest Means in the World procured it. The Public believe that I am indebted for it to Madam de Montespan : They are mistaken, I owe it to the little Duke. The King amusing himself with him, and being pleased with the Manner in which he answered his Questions, said to him, “ You are very sagacious. How can I be otherwise ? ” answered the Child ; I have a Governante who is Wisdom itself. Go and tell her, replied the King, that you will give her this Evening an hundred thousand Livres for “ your Sugar Plums.” The Mother prejudices me against the King, and her Son reconciles me with him : I am not two Days together in the same Situation. I don’t inure myself to this Life, though I once thought myself capable of bearing any Thing. None would envy my Condition, if they knew what Cares and Pains attend it, and how many Vexations it exposes me to. ’Tis a Subjection that has no Precedent : I have not Leisure to write nor even to say my Prayers ; ’tis a downright Slavery. All my Friends apply to me, without perceiving I can

do

do nothing even for my Relations. The Regiment I have been soliciting this Fortnight past, will not be granted me. I am heard only when there is nobody else to listen to. I have spoken thrice to M. Colbert; I have represented to him the Justice of your Pretensions: He has started a thousand Objections, and told me that the King only can resolve them. I will get Madam de Montespan to speak for you; but I must wait a favourable Hour, and who knows whether it will offer? If it does not, I will charge my Friend with your Affair, and he will speak to the King: I rely much upon him.

LETTER XLV.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

Sept. 6, 1674.

I THINK seriously of a Match for you: Save your Money for the Charges of your Wedding, which, I believe, will soon happen. The little Duke has been ill. The Princess is as beautiful as an Angel. *Matta* is dead without Confession. *Villandri* has been found dead in his Closet. Think of God while you may, and defer not your Conversion to the last Hour: We are capable of doing but very little then. Excuse this short Sermon, which flows from solid Friendship. I am treating about an Estate, for

which I offer two hundred and forty thousand Livres: Say nothing about it. I fancy we shall find our old Age pretty enough, if it be possible for Age to be pretty.

LETTER XLVI.

To the same.

October 16, 1674.

I AM buying an Estate; the Bargain is struck at two hundred and fifty thousand Livres: It lies fourteen Leagues from *Paris*, ten from *Ver-sailles*, and four from *Chartres*. It is pleasant and noble, and brings in 11 or 12,000 Livres a Year. They call it *Maintenon*: It is a spacious Castle at the End of a large Borough; a Situation that suits my Taste. There's a Retreat for you, which will be the worst that can happen to you. *Madam de Montespan*, who does not want good Sense, and to whom I have shewn your Letter, pretends that you ought not to hesitate about the Marriage I propose for you. Adieu.

LETTER XLVII.

To the same.

November, 20, 1674.

I DID not write to you sooner, because I am not Mistress of my Time. You have seen some Samples of my Servitude, but you have not
seen

seen all. I desire Leave to go to *Maintenon* for one Day, and cannot obtain it. I have People at work there, and cannot go to give them Directions. 'Tis a passionate Fondness I have for that Estate, and a new Passion too; so you may judge how much I suffer when it is thwarted. I never see M. de *Louvois* without speaking to him about you: I put him in mind of his Promises, and he repeats them to me; the true Court-stile. Enjoy what you have, till something better happens; and to comfort you in your heavy, gloomy Hours, consider that I can neither lie down nor rise when I please; that when in Company I long for nothing so much as to be alone; and ever occupied I am always wishing for nothing to do. Think of God, which is a much better Consolation, I believe we shall go next Summer to *Barege*.

LETTER XLVIII.

To the same.

November 30, 1674.

GO to M. de *Louvois*, and return him Thanks: Love me always; be an honest Man; apply yourself to your Profession; make yourself no Enemies, and all Things will go well. Adieu. I am setting out for *Maintenon*.

D 5

LETTER

LETTER XLIX.

To the Abbé Gobelin.

Decemb. 1674

I Perform as well as I can what you have ordered me for the Advent Season, and as I cannot have any Merit by my Prayers, I have at least the Merit of Obedience. I pray, and tho' my Thoughts wander very much in this Duty, 'tis at least so much Time given to God. I pine away, and wait for the Spring. God grant that the Acquisition of *Maintenon* may not involve me in Law Suits, at a Season which I wish to employ better. The King is actually sitting in Judgment on the Affair you know of: I have done my Duty: You may well suppose that the Court is for *Madam de Verneuil*, and that they think it just to oppress the Citizen. I perceive that a Matter of so great Consequence will be tried by a very small Number of Judges: They are but six, and the King, who certainly is upright in his Intentions, is yet not burthened with too much Knowledge: *Madam de Montespan* has not engaged to any Side; at least she has endeavoured to persuade me so.

LETTER

LETTER L.

To the same.

IT is a long while since I have heard from you; and tho' one's Life is spent here in great Dissipation, I still feel with Sorrow the Value of your Correspondence: Your Letters are become to me one of the Necessaries of Life. I am dying with the Fear of losing all the Fruit I may hope from it whilst I can have it, and of losing you when I shall have put myself in a Situation to see you oftener. This is frankly enough giving you a Prospect of your Death; but I believe you are not frightened at it. My Sentiments and Resolutions are always the same: The Return from the Journey to *Bârege* must be waited for. The Affair of *Maintenon* is concluded. Pray to God earnestly that he would break my Chains, if my Liberty is to be subservient towards my Salvation: 'Tis what I daily beg of him.

LETTER LI.

*To Madam de Coulanges.**February, 1675.*

I AM more impatient to send you News of *Maintenon* than you are to receive it. I have been there two Days, which seemed to me as

a Moment : My Heart is rivetted to that Place. Don't you wonder that at my Age I should be attached to such Things like a Child ? The House is fine enough, a little too spacious for the Retinue I design to bring into it. It has Appurtenances of Woods and Groves, where *Madam de Sevigné* might dream most pleasantly about *Madam de Grignan*. I wish I could live there, but the Time is not yet come. It is true that the King has stiled me *Madam de Maintenon*, and I had the Weakness to blush at it ; and 'tis as true, that I could shew him greater Complaisance than that of bearing the Name of an Estate which is his Gift. I shall plainly tell *Madam de Montespan*, that there are false Brethren, and that the Town is very punctually informed in the Morning of all that is done here the preceding Night. My Husband's Friends are wrong in accusing me with having concerted with the King this Change of Name : They are not his Friends who say so, but my Enemies, and those who envy me ; A little Prosperity creates many. The Journey to *Barege* is not yet fixed ; when I return from thence, I shall be more at Liberty, and have the Pleasure of seldomer writing to you. *M. de Coulanges* is here, and we are not a little sensible of it ; before he came we were all dull and melancholy.

LETTER LII.

*To the Abbé Gobelin.**Feb. 9. 1675.*

I BEG you would prescribe me something for this Lent: I have found the Benefit of the Advent, by my Fidelity in performing what you ordered me. I am afraid we shall not go to *Barege*: The Morrow always sets aside the firmest Resolutions of the Eve; the Physicians can't agree. I did hope for more bodily Rest, and more Peace of Mind, from that Journey than I find here. I have just heard a fine Declamation of Father *Mascaron's*: He diverts the Mind, but touches not the Heart; his Eloquence is unfit for the Pulpit, yet he is in Vogue. He told us, that a Hero was a Robber, who did at the Head of an Army what a Highwayman did alone. Our Master was not pleased with the Comparison.

LETTER LIII.

*From the Countess de B—— to Madam
de Maintenon.*

TRULY, Madam, one repays so dearly, by the Irksomeness attending your Absence, the Pleasure of having seen you, that I cannot be obliged to you for the Visit you made me here.

on Account of the Uneasiness it has left me
under: And the World appears to so great Ad-
vantage in you, that I should have quitted my
Solitude, and launched out into it again, had I
not recollected, that among all I have seen in
it, there is scarcely one Person like yourself.
This Consideration has made me cheerfully re-
turn into my Hermitage, with an Intent to
make the Freedom of Solitude subservient to
thinking often of you, tho' without pretending
to the same Return from you; the Court having
too many Persons present, for the absent to
expect to find any Place there. But if I should
sometimes happen to come into your Mind,
let it never be, Madam, without thinking of
me as of a Person who honours you more than
any one living, and who is as sincerely

Yours, &c.

LETTER LIV.

From Mr. d'Aubigne to the same.

IT is as impossible for me, my dear Sister, to
cease to love you, as 'tis for you to leave off
chiding me. I shall not answer your Reproa-
ches, by availing myself of that pitiful Right
of Seniority, which I owe to Chance only; but
I will follow your Counsels, which are the
Fruit of a System of Wisdom formed by your

own

own Reflections. I will never more see the Count de ———, because, though I might see him without Danger, I cannot do it without giving you Uneasiness. I should be sorry to grieve your Soul. 'Tis for the same Considerations that I promise to sacrifice to you that Passion I am so fond of, and which you so mortally hate, though it has not hitherto disordered me so much as you have been told. Entreat Madam de Montespan and M. de Louvois not to let me languish longer. The Vexation of seeing so many Men climbing to the first Employments, whilst I remain in the Subaltern Posts, greatly increases my natural Melancholy. I should get rid of my Vapours, if my Mind were freed from these Inquietudes. From one Thought to another, from Project to Project, I sink into Dreams that consume me like a slow Poison. I ride out every Day, and find myself the better for it. *Circe's* little one is a very pretty Child: His Mother recommends him to me, not as to a Relation, but as a Favourite: You plainly see she is mistaken: I will send him to you. The wither'd Beauty sends you a thousand Compliments, and says that you grow young again: Nothing keeps off old Age better than Favour. Love me, my dear Sister: I shall think myself no longer beloved, when you leave off telling

me my own. I daily pray to God that he would make me as much his as I am yours. I have seen M. *Brisacier*. He is not a Man, but an Angel. Nothing ever inspired me with so strong a Desire to be a good Christian, as to see Virtue practised by the Preacher of it.

LETTER LV.

To Madam de S. G——.

MADAM Duferet has not told you the thousandth Part of my Sentiments of Esteem, Friendship and Respect for you: Believe me, they cannot be expressed by the most eloquent Tongue. I shall never forget the Assurances you gave me of yours, at a Juncture when the *Villar's* had perfidiously alarmed my Friendship. All I have to wish for, is to find in Madam de Montessan a Heart like yours: I should be the happiest Woman on Earth, in a Place, where, if one has ever so little Grandeur, it always exceeds the Felicity attending it. But it is vain to expect it. I have tried her on every Side by all the Ways I could imagine: She is bad at Bottom; she is kind only by Freaks and Starts; even her Virtue is mere Caprice; not two Days together in the same Humour. I am as much tired with all those *Eclaircissements* which tie me faster to her, as with

all

all the Bickerings that make me pine away. We are Friends to-day; who knows how it will be to-morrow? I should be better pleased with a little constant Adversity, than much Prosperity without Solidity. In vain I renounce all my Tastes and Inclinations, and even my Sentiments; they, nevertheless, lay horrible Things to my Charge. The Feast of *St. Hubert* is to be kept at *Villers-Cottrets*; they have given me four hundred Louis d'Or for Cloaths. Every Thing sent into me by *La Bretigni* is in the most elegant Taste. But what are all these Vanities, all these Pleasures, to one who is sick of the World and its Works? I greatly envy your Tranquility. You can serve God in Peace; nothing would be wanting to your Felicity, if a Fortnight spent in my Place could make you fully sensible of its Value. Nothing can be compared to what I go through, and I daily pray to God that he would give me a Soul less sensible. The Bishop of *Senlis*'s Discourse with me has given me great Comfort. Pray tell him what Veneration I have for him.

LETTER LVI.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

NO Man is unhappy but by his own Fault. This shall always be my Text; and my Answer to your Lamentations. Think, my
 dear

dear Brother, on the Voyage to *America*, on the
 Misfortunes of your Father, the Miseries of our
 Infancy, the Wretchedness of our youthful Days;
 and you will bless Providence, instead of mur-
 muring against Fortune. Ten Years ago we
 were both very distant from the Station we are
 now in: Our Hopes were so small, that we
 limited our Desires to three thousand Livres a
 Year. We have at present four times as much;
 and ought we to wish for more? We enjoy that
 happy Competency, which formerly you so
 highly extoll'd. Let us be content. If Riches
 increase, let us receive them as from the Hand of
 God; but let not our Views be too vast. We
 have the Necessaries and Conveniences of Life;
 all the rest is superfluous. All this Thirst after
 Grandeur arises from the Emptiness of an un-
 quiet Heart. All your Debts are paid: You
 may live pleasantly without contracting new
 ones. What else can you wish for? Must
 Schemes to grow rich and great be pursued at the
 Expence of your Repose and your Health? Read
 the Life of *St. Louis*, and you will see how little
 all worldly Grandeur is capable of satisfying the
 Heart of Man. None but God is capable of
 filling it. I repeat it, you are unhappy only
 thro' your own Fault. Your Inquietudes im-
 pair your Health, which you should preserve,

were

were it only that I love you. Work upon your Humour; if you can render it less bilious and gloomy, it will be a great Point gained. This is not the Work of Reflection only; you must add Exercise, Diversions, an uniform and regular Life. You will never think well, whilst you are ill: When the Body is cast down, the Soul has no Vigour. Adieu. Write to me oftener, but in a less moanful Stile.

LETTER LVII.

To the same.

Bazas, May 28, 1675.

WE have fine Weather and every Convenience. There is no more Fatigue in our Journey, than in going from *Paris* to *Ver-sailles*. They receive us in all Places as they would the King himself. *Guyenne* distinguishes itself. The Duke de *St. Simon* treated us magnificently at *Blayes*, and the * Jurates of *Bordeaux* got a very fine Vessel there in readiness for us. One of our Retinue was drowned just as we were going on board, and our Chaplain judged it very imprudent not to take Warning from that Accident. We went on safely with forty Oars, and passed by the City. Ships were sent off to salute us, some full of Violins, and

* Corporation.

others

others of Trumpets: A prodigious Concourse of People covered the Banks of the River, and made the Air ring with Shouts of *Long live the King*. The Marshal *d'Albret* conducted the * Prince, to whom the Corporation made a Speech,——*The Remainder is lost.*

LETTER LVIII.

To Madam de Montespan.

Barege, June 10, 1675.

THE Prince is in Health; we are this Moment arrived. This can't be called a Journey; 'tis a pleasant Walk. The Province of *Guyenne* has done Wonders, and I have firmly promised the Marshal *d'Albret* and the Duke *de St. Simon* to write you an Account of it. The King could not have been better received: In all Places infinite Honours and Acclamations. You would have been charmed, Madam, and you cannot imagine to what a Degree these People love the King. The Prince answered the Harangue of the Corporation of *Bordeaux*; *M. le Rogois* has taken upon him to send you all these Particulars. In four or five Days we shall begin to use the Baths; they relate Wonders of them here; but Patience is requisite. There is a great deal of Company here; we shall be as free

* The Duke *du Maine*.

however

however as if we were alone, tho' we are too much respected not to be under a little Constraint.

LETTER LIX.

To the same.

Antwerp, April 18, 1676.

Madam,

OUR Journey has been very favourable, and the Prince is in as good Health as the Marchioness * *de Suger* ; both alike unknown, both extremely fatigued, and both very much surprized at not finding here any Commands from you : We wait impatiently for them. We have the same Weather that we had on the Road, that is to say, the finest that can be imagined. The Prince is chearful enough, has a good Appetite, and sleeps sound. It is but Justice that I should pass here for his Mother, seeing I have all the Tenderness of one, and am not less affected than you with all his Ailments and Infirmities.

* Madam Scarron took that Name in the Journey she made to *Antwerp* for the Cure of the Duke *du Maine*, who passed for her Son.

LETTER

LETTER LX.

*To the same.**Antwerp, April 20.**Madam,*

THE * Physician visited the Prince Yesterday, and spoke very sensibly concerning his Infirmary: He answers the Description you have had of him, very gentle, modest, and no Quack. Yet I confess to you, Madam, that I am loth to trust him with the Prince; but I must obey. He give us this one Day more to recruit ourselves after the Fatigues of the Journey, and tomorrow he goes to work. I suffer beforehand all that the poor Infant is like to do. 'Tis now indeed, Madam, that you might reproach me with loving him excessively. I shall not be able to bear the Sight of the Apparatus: However, he has promised me to treat the Distemper gently. He pretends it is only a Weakness, and this removes my Uneasiness. The Prince said to him, 'At least, Sir, I was not born so; look at 'Mamma; and my Papa is not lame.' He spoke this very gracefully, and with much Smart-

* That Physician was an Empyric, whose Skill was much cried up: His Remedies were so violent, that they lengthen'd the Child's Leg without strengthening it.

ness. We are quite unknown here, and shall live very retired: Happy, if we bring back Health from hence. I beg it of God every Hour of the Day, and will cause an hundred Masses to be said with that Intention. My little Prince most humbly kisses the fair Lady's Hand.

LETTER LXI.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

Barege, July 8.

WE have been here ever since the 10th of July. The little Duke has used the Baths, but we don't find they have yet had any Effect. We must have Patience, you upon your Rocks, and I in the *Pyrenees*. We shall meet again, if God pleases: I never write to M. de *Louvois* without mentioning you; and I often write to him. He will keep his Word with me, were it only to get rid of my Importunities, of which I myself am always ashamed, but my tender Affection for you always over-rules my Bashfulness. At the worst we shall have *Maintenon*: If I cannot live in it, I will at least die there. Court the Favour of Madam du *Fresnoy* by Letters; she is all-powerful in a certain Sphere: You see I am not cast down in a Place which is more frightful than I can express: To complete the Misfortune, we are freezing here, and have
very

very sad Company: They shew us much Respect, and make us yawn. However, I have less Care and Vexation here than I have at Court. You cannot be too intimate with *Vauban*: The Friendship of that Man singly is more valuable than that of all the Courtiers put together. All our Women are sick: They are *Paris Badaudes**, who found the World very wide when they had got as far as *Estampes*.

LETTER LXII.

To the same.

Brion, Sept. 1.

I AM in a Country where they speak *Poitevin*, and this single Merit makes me find good Company in all Places. The Intelligence I receive from Court makes me hope that I shall pass my Time agreeably there, and be allowed to take more Care of myself than I have done heretofore: I am firmly resolved to do so, and at the same Time employ all my Credit to get you out of your present Abode. You may depend upon it that I will this Winter think seriously of a Match for you. Be cheerful, and think of your Salvation: 'Tis the only Thing useful and pleasant. *Madam de Montespan* writes me very affectionate Letters.

* A Word used in the same Sense as *Cockneys* in *English*.

LETTER

LETTER LXIII.

*To the same.**Richelieu, Sept. 28.*

I HAVE abundance of Things to tell you concerning *Poitou*. I have been at M. de *Villette's* House, and am very much taken with him: His Wife is the most sensible Person among my female Relations; I have made many jealous here: Great Honours have been paid me, and the Intendant entertained me in my Passage through *Poitiers*. I have brought away the History, I mean the Life, of my Grandfather, and several Papers that will prove our Noblesse, if ever there be Occasion for it. Your State of Health afflicts me; be wise and sober; give no Place to Melancholy, and ever bear in Mind that Good and Evil are to be found in all Stations. Be frugal, and hoard up: All Things are subject to great Vicissitudes; Favour and Disgrace go Hand-in-Hand. Adieu, dear Brother.

LETTER LXIV.

*To the Abbé Gobelin.**From Little Niort.*

I Receive no Letters from the fair Lady. Persons present use me very well; I can't say as
 E much

much of the Absent; they forgot me: And you
also, even you forsake me! Vex me no longer,
Or dread the Wrath of my offended Glory.

The Mountaineers are not squeamish, and will
perhaps put up with my Decrepidness: I shall
be as faithful to them as you are unfaithful to
me. You'll judge by my Stile that our Prince
is in good Health. I am this Day preparing to
go to Confession at *Bordeaux*, if I can find there
a Confessor that may understand me: I persuade
myself more and more every Day, that Solitude
is necessary for me, and Dissipation dangerous:
I do every Thing you have prescribed me.
Our Almoner does not often see me, because he
sits in the second Coach: He is merry or sad,
according to the Accommodation he meets with
at the different Inns. He wonders at his being
able to hold out under the Fatigue of a Journey,
which he makes in a Coach that travels three
Hours in the Morning, and as much in the Af-
ternoon; and at every Place he finds Dinner and
Supper ready. I hear Mass before we set out in
the Morning, that he may not go without his
Breakfast; for he piques himself on having hot
Blood and a canine Appetite. He bled at the
Nose one Day as he was at his mental Prayers,
and was very much frightened at it. You'll see
me at my Return still resolved to be guided by
you

you as a Child, with great Indifference as to the Station in Life that may be allotted me; and I will leave the Court the Moment you advise me to do so: Were it not for you, I should be now at *Maintenon*.

LETTER LXV.

To the same.

NEVER did I long so much to discourse with you. You will hear it said, that I saw the King Yesterday: Methinks I spoke to him as a Christian, and like a true Friend of *Madam de Montespan*. I am very uneasy, and every Body here is so, more or less, but from different Motives. When I was but in a bad Way at Court, I was advised not to withdraw from it: Now that I am well here, I know not how to manage, in order to break loose from People that detain me by Complaisance and Friendship. These Chains are harder to break than if my Stay were forcibly required. However, my Sentiments don't alter: It is impossible for me to make a Sacrifice, all my Life, of my Liberty, my Health, and my Salvation; but this is not a Season to withdraw.

LETTER LXVI.

To the same.

NO body can be more affected and taken up with your Grief than I am, nor is there any Thing that I would not do to assuage it. I am very sensible that your resigned Temper is the most solid of all Remedies ; but though this Remedy keeps one from murmuring and complaining, it does not prevent the Impressions of Sorrow, nor hinder the Heart from pining under a Loss so great as that which you have lately met with. Treat yourself then as you'd treat another, to whom you would prescribe, Diversion. I am ever your Friend. Would to God I could supply the Place of the Person Heaven has deprived you of ! I saw Yesterday our Friend *Gartigny*, and cannot be easy while I see his Merit so ill rewarded.

LETTER LXVII.

To the same.

I Have received the Treatise on the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*, which you have been kind enough to send me. The King is silent in regard to M. *Gartigny*, and I cannot guess the Cause of it. There are some Men, whose Misfortune

fortune it is to have a sinister Construction put on all their Actions, and to be suspected of Intrigues because they have Wit: Though I have none, this has been my Case. I doubt not but our Friend is of an excellent Character: But they are not made for him; Merit makes but a poor Figure here without Protection; and those who might be Protectors, are not fond of encumbering themselves with it. I have drawn up a Scheme of Life, for the Time when I shall be free and far enough from Court. I shall here leave Margin, for you to add or retrench, as you think fit.

1. Rise between 7 and 8, and spend an Hour in Prayer.

2. Go abroad two Days every Week upon Visits of Necessity: Retire at 10 in the Evening, and go to Prayers with my Servants.

3. Allot two Days in the Week for visiting the Poor and Prisoners.

4. Be modestly cloathed, wear neither Gold nor Silver, and give the Tenth of my Income to the Poor.

Thus would I set out, 'till my Zeal should enable me to do more, in Expectation of that calm, tranquil Time, of which I form to myself so delightful a Prospect. I do nothing worth a Straw, and give Way to Sloth; which makes

me fear that the Course of Devotion I am projecting, may proceed from the same methodical Spirit which I display in the Furniture at *Main-tenon*.

LETTER LXVIII.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

September.

YOU labour under Cares and Vexations, and you participate enough in mine to make me forbear discovering them to you: And yet, with whom can I more properly bemoan, than with you, the common Loss we have just met with? The Marshal *d'Albret* is dead; he wrote me a Letter, before he expired, expressive of his Esteem and Friendship for me. I have just read it again, and could not refrain from Tears. He died like a Saint: But how do we know whether he had Time enough to atone for his Faults? Yes, he has Leisure sufficient; and he has atoned for them: These several Years past he walked in the Ways of Salvation: In short, I don't love to doubt of the Salvation of my Friends. Let us, dear Brother, turn our Thoughts towards ourselves; we are both growing old, and infirm: Let us then, by living well, smoothe over the Horrors of Death, which are most terrible to those who have led bad Lives.

LETTER

LETTER LXIX.

To the same.

October 18.

I Cannot inure myself to the Loss we have sustained : It is a great Misfortune to be so tender hearted. Your State of Health makes me tremble; and my Indolence in the Service of God makes me dread your resembling me in this Point. I press M. de Louvois; and he gives me Promises; Time will bring about all Things: We shall fare tolerably enough here; Let us think of our Lot in the other World. I have been at *Maintenon*, which is greatly embellished: Upon entering the Gallery, the first thing I observed was the Marshal's Picture, which drew Tears from me. The King intends to make that Castle a delightful Place; he has sent thither M. *Le Nautre*, and I daily find there some Present from the fine Lady. You have a furious Longing to come *into* the Great World, and I to get *out* of it. Thus every one has his Afflictions. I am as much affected with yours as with my own, though my Share of them here is, perhaps, as great as yours.

LETTER LXX.

To the same.

1677.

I Use my utmost Endeavours to remove you from your present Post. M. de Louvois positively promised it me yesterday, and Madam de Montefpan also spoke to the King about it. Arm yourself with Patience, and think that, while you are complaining, there are some in the World who have not a Moment's Rest, who are in a continual Slavery, and spend all their Life in doing the Will of others. Let not this Description grieve you.

LETTER LXXI.

To the same.

1677.

I Could wish to have all the Failings which I have reproached you with, and to be capable of receiving a Reprimand in the Manner you have taken mine. Be persuaded too, that, from one of my Temper, it is the greatest Proof of Tenderness that could be given you. Be content; you are going to the finest Place in the World. Dream of nothing but how to spend your Time chearfully there; and think of marrying, that you may meet with no more Opposition at *Coignac*. I have suffered a great deal
these

these several Days: But Madam de Montespan's
Turbulence will soon subside; were it lasting,
'twould be impossible to bear it.

LETTER LXXII.

To the same.

Maintenon, May 12.

WE shall shortly set out for Barege: We
shall stop at *Fontevault*, and probably
meet again about the Middle of next Month.
Live, my dear Brother, as chearfully as you can.
You are in a fine Place, in a good Post, and
your own Master: *I know some who are more
wretched.* My own Afflictions touch me less
than your's. Don't think you are slighted at
Court; we shall keep our Ground there. En-
joy what you have like a Philosopher. The King
arrives at *Versailles* on *Monday*, and we shall be
there on *Sunday*. They thought themselves rid
of us; but you know me; I am not easily
shaken off;

LETTER LXXIII.

*To the same.**Fontevrault, June 12, 1677.*

WE shall set out from hence on *Monday*; we shall go to *Poitiers*, and then directly to *Coignac*. The Prince is attended by *M. Fagon*, *M. Le Ragois*, his Preceptor, Almoner, and six Valets de Chambre; and I have three Women. I give you this Detail, that you may take your Measures. To amuse you I send you a Copy of a short Letter wrote by the Prince to *Madam de Montespan*.

‘ *Madam de Maintenon* spends every Day in
 • spinning, my fair Lady; and were she left to
 • herself, she must either do this, or write all
 • Night. Adieu, fair Lady; I beg you would
 • believe, that notwithstanding the Liberty I
 • take with you, I have that Respect and tender
 • Affection for you which is incomprehensible.’

LETTER LXXIV.

*To Madam de Coulanges.**Coignac, June 16, 1677.*

I Have just Time enough to say a Word or two:
 I am as much charmed with having received
 that Letter, as I am vexed at not being able to
 answer it. I thank you for the Advice, and will

make good Use of it: I always had a Suspicion of his, (or her) Sentiments, and I wish I had been mistaken. My Compliments to M. de Coulanges, and then to the Abbé, and then to the Abbess. I shall ever be, &c.

LETTER LXXV.

To Madam de Montespan.

Barege, Saturday.

Madam,

I Have nothing to add to M. Fagon's Account.

The Prince well deserves that you should write a Billet to him: He avers that your Letters are as fine as your Eyes. Let me relate to you an Answer that has pleased me, because it seemed to me above his Years: I was checking him yesterday for some haughty Ways, and I told him that the King was politer than him.

‘ It is very easy for him to be so, answered he;

‘ he has a certain Knowledge of his Rank, and

‘ I am ignorant of mine.’ He spoke this in a

Tone so resolute and so concerned, that I could

not refrain from a Sigh. Madam du Fresnoy

writes to me in the most gracious Strain. I most

humbly thank you, Madam, for it; and no

body can be with more Gratitude and Re-

spect, &c.

LET

* LETTER LXXVI.

*To the same.**Madam,*

1677.

THE youngest of Authors comes to beg your Patronage for his Works. He would have been very glad of being eight Years complete before they were sent into the World; but he was afraid his Gratitude would have been suspected, had he lived above seven Years without giving you a public Testimony of it. In effect, Madam, he is in a good Measure indebted to you for what he is. Though his Birth has been happy enough, and there are few Authors to whom Heaven has been as kind as to him, he acknowledges that your Conversation has largely contributed to perfect him in what Nature had begun. If he thinks with any Rectitude, if he expresses himself with any Gracefulness, and if he already knows how to make a pretty just Discernment between Men, these are so many Talents which he has endeavoured

* This Letter was printed the following Year at the Head of a Book entituled, *Diverse Works of an Author of seven Years old*. This Epistle Dedicatory, says Bayle, has a most delicate Turn; one would think the Subject was not touched, or that the Writer intended only to skim lightly over it; yet the Eulogy is exquisite, and a great deal is said in few Words.

to

to steal from you. For my Part, Madam, as I know his most secret Thoughts, I have observed with what Admiration he hears you talk; and I can with Truth assure you, that he is much readier to listen to you than to all his Books. You will find in the Work I present to you, some tolerably good Passages of antient History: But he fears, that, in the Croud of marvellous Events that have happened in our Days, you will be but little affected with any Information he can give you of former Ages: And he has the more Reason to fear it, as he has experienced the same Thing in reading Books. He sometimes thinks it strange, that Men should have laid themselves under a Necessity to charge their Memory with Authors that tell us Things so much inferior to what we now behold. How can he find any thing striking in the Victories of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and in all that *Florus* and *Justin* relate to him? From his Cradle his Nurses have accustomed his Ears to greater Exploits. The *Greeks* taking a certain Town in ten Years, is related to him as a Prodigy: He is but seven Years old, and has already heard *Te Deum* sung in *France* for the taking of above a hundred Towns. All this, Madam, puts him a little out of Conceit with Antiquity. He is naturally proud; I plainly perceive he thinks him-
self

self descended from a good House; and with whatever Eulogies one might talk to him of *Alexander* and *Cæsar*, I doubt whether he would put himself upon a Level with the Offspring of those great Men. I assure myself that you will not disapprove of this little Pride in him, and that you will acknowledge he is no bad Judge of Heroes: But you must also acknowledge, that I am no bad Judge in making Presents, and that, seeing I had a Design to dedicate a Book to you, I could not pitch upon an Author more agreeable to you, nor one in whom you have a greater Interest. I am, Madam, your most humble, &c.

LETTER LXXVII. *

From Madam de Montespan to the King.

YOU asked me, my Dear, whether your Crown was not the Charm of your Love?

* This is the famous Letter which Madam de *Maintenon* is said to have dictated to the Marchioness de *Montespan*, and to which the Fortune of M. de *Maintenon* is commonly attributed, in consequence of the Fancy *Louis XIV.* took to the Writer of it. I think it has appeared in print elsewhere. Some Persons, who interest themselves in the Memory of M. de *Maintenon*, have assured me it is apocryphal, and that she disapproved too much the Amours of M. de *Montespan*, to be capable of writing Letters of this Nature. However, I would not suppress it, lest I should be taxed with a material Omission.

And

And when I answered, that I loved nothing in you but yourself, you told me, that I might possibly deceive myself. I had answered you much better, could I have made you sensible how much your Doubt alarmed me. I have since examined my Heart in secret: And oh! how well has it shewn me that Ambition does not act like Love! These two Passions are easily distinguished: What Use do you make of your Penetration, since you don't discern the Difference? I ambitious! I, who think I see in the Eyes of all Women the same Love I feel in my Heart for the most amiable of Men!

Must you be reminded of the Quarrel I had with you a few Days since concerning your Coldness? I don't remember what I then said to you, but I very well know Ambition never talked in that Strain. What did you not say to me, to make me easy? If I had loved the King only, would I not have been satisfied with your Excuses? Would you have found it so difficult to persuade and appease me? When I see Tenderness speaking through your Eyes, don't you perceive the same Passion answering you in mine? Could Ambition put on such a Disguise? When my Heart yields to the most delightful Transports, and sinks under them, tell me, my Dear, is this the Effect of Ambition? You love,
and

and you don't discern Love! I could say more to you, but Vexation snatches the Pen from my Hand.

LETTER LXXVIII.

To Madam de S. G——.

Verfailles, Monday — 1677.

I Was right in telling you, Madam, that M. de C——* would act the Part of a Dupe throughout this Affair. He is a Man of great Sense, but has no worldly Wisdom. With all his Zeal, he has done the very Thing which *Lauzun* would have been ashamed to have done. He wanted to convert them, and he has reconciled them. These are all idle Projects: There is none besides † *La Chaise* that can make them succeed: He has often deplored with me the King's Irregularities; but if he spoke sincerely, would he not interdict him the Sacraments? You plainly see there is some Truth in the *Provincial Letters*. Father *La Chaise* is an honest Man; but the Air of the Court taints the purest Vir-

* Probably Mons. *Bossuet*, then Bishop of *Condom*. Most Memoirs relate this Fact in a Way that does no Honour to that Prelate, whose Penetration was abused, but whose Probity was so well known, that after the Reconciliation he found himself rather the better for it at Court; nor did this Affair prejudice his Reputation in the least.

† A Jesuit, and Confessor to the King.

tue.

tue. I send you two Copies of the Verses under the Prince's Picture: Though they are *Boileau's*, it runs in my Mind that *Racine*, and even *Coulanges*, could have made better.

LETTER LXXIX.

To the Abbé Gobelin.

Verfailles, 1677.

SEND me some News of Sister *Saint-Basil*.*

I believe she is resolved to leave *Port-Royal*; but I know not whether the Hospitallers are resolved to receive her: I am very ready to conduct her to them. Think of that poor Girl, I beseech you: You Saints are cruel: Yet we ought to help one another's Weakness alternately. I wish more ardently than ever to be out of this Place, and confirm myself more and more in the Opinion that I cannot serve God here: But I speak the less of it to you, because it occurs to me that you tell every thing to the *Abbé Testu*. There's an Instance of my native Sincerity; and I believe you will like it much better than an Alteration in the Confidence I repose in you. I am going to *Maintenon*, to

* *Madam de Maintenon* had been acquainted with her at the Hospitallers in *St. James's-street*, and had conceived Esteem enough for her to consult with her about the Constitutions of *St. Cyr*, a religious Community of Ladies.

make

make a Trial of Solitude, and of the Course of Life of which I lately sent you a Sketch.

LETTER LXXX.

To the Abbé Testu.

AND thus it happens that the Inquisitive are always the worst informed. My Removal from Court is a Point so little decided, that I hold to it by stronger Tyes than ever. I have no Cause of Discontent, and, doubtless, you have been purposely ill informed. The Idea of becoming a Nun never came into my Head; therefore make *Madam de la Fayette* easy. We have laughed heartily at your honouring me with a Suspicion, that I have taken it into my Head to give Credit to what People say of the Vapours: It is true they are much more rife here than formerly; but you very well know that we must go higher up to find the Source of this Fashion. Every Body here fluctuates between Fear and Hope; we are promised great Events: You'll see by the Manner in which I shall be concerned therein, that I little think of leaving this Place: No, I will never leave it till you are worthy of having an Abbey. The King has positively said, that for the future he will have none but pious Clergymen preferred. You are going to say, What a Number of Abbeys

beys will be vacant? Adieu, my poor Abbé: Don't write to me when your Fit comes upon you: You see and paint every Thing so dark, that if I loved Solitude you would make me hate it.

LETTER LXXXI.

To the Abbé Gobelin

YOU take too seriously what I wrote to you. I don't suspect you of having revealed my Confession to the Abbé Testu; But as he is an inquisitive Man, I thought he might worm out of you more than I would have him know. It occur'd to me, that he had learned from you the Design I had formed to leave this Place, of which he knew nothing before but aerial Projects. This is all I meant; therefore give yourself no farther Uneasiness.

LETTER LXXXII.

To the same.

I Arrived Yesterday from *Maintenen*, where I spent eight Days with a Serenity and Content of Mind that makes me relish the Court worse than than ever; and if I gave vent to my Inclination, I should be ready every Hour of the Day to petition for Leave to retire: It is impossible for me to lead the same Life much longer.

I undertake too much, for the Body or the Mind, and perhaps both, not to sink under it. It will happen as God pleases: I frequently offer up to him my Sufferings, real or imaginary; and if his Will was known to me, I would follow it in all Points, even the most opposite to my Temper. I am on very good Terms with the King, who no longer dreads the Conversation of the * *sine Genius*. I am not upon ill Terms with Madam de Montespan, and I make use of this Season to let her understand that I want to retire. She answers but little to this Proposal. I recommend the King to your Prayers, as he stands on the Brink of a great Precipice.

LETTER LXXXIII.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

METHINKS you have no natural Affection for your Relations: I am not so, but feel a great Tenderneſs for them: They have their Failings, and ſo has every body. We muſt not break off Friendſhip with any: There are Times when it is neceſſary to live among Relations, and then a complaiſant Habit proves a great Reſource. I have found Mademoiſelle de Floigny

* Louis XIV. called Madam Scarron the *sine Genius* of Madam de Montespan.

very handsome and very amiable; but I know not why you regard this Negotiation as a Thing yet to be done, when I hear that you are satisfied with all the Conditions, that nothing remains but to sign the Contract, and go to Church. I make you an Offer of having the Nuptials celebrated at *Maintenon*. I have been told you have lost fourteen thousand Livres at play this Winter: I hope you will game no more, if you marry: I believe you are too honest to put your Wife and Children in the right Road to the Hospital. For my Part, I am not in a Humour to streighten myself in order to supply your Extravagancies, when I hear, that whilst I am saving, even in Necessaries, to furnish my Country Seat, you stake a thousand Pistoles at play, and spend more in a Month than I do in a Year. From this motherly Admonition conclude, that I have all the Tendernefs of a Mother. If you marry, let good Motives prompt you to an Affair of such Importance. Adieu. I have already sent a Cradle to *Maintenon*, as a Piece of Furniture you may probably want.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXIV.

To the same.

LOOK upon your Marriage in the best Point of View, since it is done: God has permitted it, and you have nothing but Thanks to return him. Game no more, and be frugal. Enjoy Tranquility and Freedom; and especially, my dear Brother, resist that Melancholy to which you are so naturally inclined. You are not ill looked upon here; they approve of your Marriage. Your Wife is pious, young, affable, and loves you: A richer one would have been less tractable. Lay open your Heart to me without Reserve concerning her, that I may treat her better or worse, according as you are more or less satisfied with her Conduct. She has a Failing, which is an Affectation of laughing, and speaking with an affected Grimace, like Madam de Longueville, who could act such a Part with the Countenance and Wit of an Angel. For God's Sake let her speak naturally. It is a troublesome Office to set up for her Gouvernante; but I would not do it, if I loved her less than I do. Adieu, dear Brother, be cheerful: Think of the Condition in which we were born, and we shall esteem ourselves happy.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXV.

To the same.

A WIFE of fifteen is no small Plague : I wonder at your dreaming of rambling about the Kingdom ! The poor Child ! Can you think of leaving her alone ? She writes to me, that it will break her Heart. — Either stay at home, or take her along with you in your Travels. I send you an Account of what I have laid out to cloath her, and for the Wedding ; not with a View that you should pay it, but to let you see that Money runs away fast, and that the Sum is large for Persons in our Circumstances. Your Wife's Shifts are as fine as the Queen wears ; and no Man living has Linen to exceed your's : I never had, nor shall I ever think of having any so curious, tho' I live at Court, where Example carries every thing to Excess. You will infallibly ruin me, my dear Brother, if you be not saving on your Part.

LETTER LXXXVI.

To Madam d'Aubigné.

YOU have here, most amiable Sister, a Calculation of what your daily Expence ought to amount to for twelve Persons, viz. Monsieur and Madam, three Maid Servants, four

four Footmen, two Coachmen, and a Valet de
Chambre.

	Livres. Sols.	
Fifteen Pound of Butcher's Meat, } at 5 Sols per Pound, — — }	3	15
Two Joints of Roast Meat, —	2	10
Bread, — — — — —	1	10
Wine, — — — — —	2	10
Wood for Fewel, — — —	2	00
Fruit, — — — — —	1	10
Candles, — — — — —	0	08
Wax Candles, — — — — —	0	10
	<hr/>	
	14	13

Add to these Washing, Salt and Spices, your
Expences need not exceed fifteen Livres *per*
Diem. I reckon four Sols in Wine for four
Footmen and your two Coachmen: Madam
de Montespan allows no more to her's; and if
you keep Wine in your Cellar, it would cost you
but three Sols. I have set down six Sols for the
Valet de Chambre, and twenty for you and
your Spouse: I reckon every Thing at the least.
I allow a Pound of Candles, because the Days
are short. I set down forty Sols for firing, tho'
you want only two Fires; and I allow thirty
Sols for Fruit, tho' Sugar is but eleven Sols, and
a Quarter of a Pound is sufficient to sweeten a
Compote. I set down two Pieces of roast Meat,
one

one of which may be saved when Monsieur or Madam dines or sups abroad : But then I forgot a boiled Fowl in the Soup. We understand domestic Oeconomy, and still you may, without exceeding the fifteenth Livre, have sometimes a Course of Sauzages, sometimes of Sheeps Tongues, the eternal Pyramid, and the Compote which you are so fond of. All this granted, which I learn at Court, dear Child, your Table Expence should not exceed 6000 Livres.

For Cloathing, Madam, }
let us set down — } 1000

For Monsieur, — — 1000

For Wages and Liveries, 1000

For House Rent — 1000

—————
10000

Is not all this very decent and elegant ? If this Calculation may be of any Use to you, I shall not regret the Pains I have taken about it ; at least it will shew you that I know something of Household Affairs. Adieu, dear Child ; love me as I love you.

LETTER LXXXVII.

*To Madam de Montespan.**Maintenon, March 13, 1678.**Madam,*

YOU could not send me a more agreeable Piece of News than the Surrender of *Ghent*: In all Appearance the Citadel has capitulated by this Time. The King will soon return to you, Madam, overflowing with Love, and resplendent with Glory. I participate infinitely in your Joy. My Sister and Brother arrived here yesterday, with a grateful Sense of your Kindness to them. The Prince is in Health: I herewith send you a Copy of a Letter he wrote to the King.

From the Duke du Maine to the King.

‘Sire,

‘ If your Majesty goes on taking Towns, ’tis
 ‘ out of Dispute that I must be a Dunce; for
 ‘ M. *le Ragais* never fails to make me lay aside
 ‘ my Books when the News of it arrives; and
 ‘ I rise from the Letter I have the Honour to
 ‘ write to you, only in order to make a Bon-
 ‘ fire.’

You will find, Madam, great Alterations at *Maintenon*; *Mignard* has outdone himself, and
 that

that Picture eclipses all the finest Paintings of Italy. Madam, I leave you to think at Leisure of your Conqueror. If ever any Passion was pardonable, this must doubtless be so; but none of this Kind can be pardonable in the Sight of God.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

To Madam de St. G——.

1679.

THE beautiful Duchess is inconsolable; and

I am no less grieved that she should think Madam de Montespan has acted by my Counsels; I beg you would undeceive her: Nobody loves her more than I do. Madam du Fresnoy could tell her from what Quarter the Blow came, and teach her to mistrust her female Friends. Madam de Montespan complains of her last Lying-in: She says, that this young Lady has made her lose the King's Heart; and she quarrels with me about it, as if I had not often advised her never to lie-in again. She upbraids herself for not having followed the King to Flanders, but it could not be otherwise. She swears that from henceforth he shall never make another Campaign, as if Glory did not influence him more than Love. I pity Madam de Montespan: What would it be, if she knew all her Misfortunes?

She is very far from thinking the King is unfaithful; she only accuses him of Coldness. None dare venture to inform her of this new Passion, which is no longer a Secret to any but herself.

L E T T E R LXXXIX.

To the same.

April 1679.

THE Peace is signed: Madam *de Montespan* very seriously declares, that if she could lay hold of the Prince of *Orange*, she would strangle him with her own Hands. She accuses me of loving the King: This Crime, said I, laughing, is common to us both. But, replied she, don't take it into your Head that he loves a Person———. There she broke off, and 'tis the first Time I have seen her check her angry Transports. The Favour and Credit you have acquired, added she, will not be more lasting than mine. I boldly answered her, that a Woman of my Years could not give Umbrage to a well-turned Mind; that my Conduct, of which she had been an Eye-witness ten Years successively, gave the Lye to her injurious Suspicions; that I had so little dreamed of the Design she imputed to me, that I often entreated her to obtain Leave for me to retire; that I would no longer bear with her haughty Airs; that

that the Oddities of her Temper shortened my Days, by the Vexations they exposed me to. And who detains you here, said she? I answered her, The King's Will, my Duty, my Sense of Gratitude, the Interest of my Family. This Dialogue was carried no farther; I withdrew, and now I am in my Closet, bemoaning my Afflictions, and consoling myself with you. Madam *du Fresnoy* revenges herself on me, for the Decline of her Credit. Though devoured with Care, I am obliged to dry up my Tears, and appear gay and contented. Oh! when shall I at least have the Satisfaction of weeping freely?

LETTER XC.

To the same.

April 19, 1679.

THE Prince of *Marillac* is just gone out of my Apartment. 'Tis surprising to see how earnest that Man is to serve me: I know not what Design may be concealed under that eager Officeousness. I receive the Father as coldly as the Son. Horrid Things are imputed to them; to the one Counsels, to the other Actions. The King has spent two Hours in my Closet. 'Tis the most amiable Man in his Kingdom. I discoursed with him about his Salvation, and he gave me an attentive Hearing. Perhaps he is

not so averſe to thinking of it as his Courtiers imagine: He has good Sentiments, and frequently turns his Thoughts towards God. It would be great Pity if God did not enlighten a Soul made for him.

LETTER XCI.

To the ſame.

May 4.

YESTERDAY the King had a very ſharp Dialogue with Madam de Montefpan, at which I was preſent. Diana was the Subject of it. I wondered at the King's Patience and the Fury of the Marchioneſs. The whole ended with theſe terrible Words; *I have told you before, Madam, I will not be controlled.* Madam de Montefpan aſks Counſel of me; I talk to her of God, and ſhe thinks I have an Underſtanding with the King. She flies out againſt the poor Girl, rails at Father La Chaiſe and M. de Noailles: She exaggerates the Expences, and invents Calumnies: She ſpends whole Hours with M. de Louvois and Madam de Thiange: She deplores the Lot of Princes. The King is attached to her by Habit; I doubt not but Compaſſion will make him return to her.

LET-

LETTER XCII.

To the same.

May 24. 1679.

NEW Plagues every Day! The King shuns Madam de Montespan with a Kind of Affectation: She has retired to *Clugni*: All the Courtiers think the Breach will never be made up. The King has owned to me that he still loves her, and more than he could wish. The Duke du Maine attaches him to his Mother: He cannot see him without relenting. Madam de Soubize is too beautiful in * *Mademoiselle's* Conceit, and too virtuous in the Opinion of † *Monsieur*. Du Fresnoy is forsaken: She has had Recourse to me, as if I had the Esteem and Friendship of the Public at my Disposal. We embraced each other: I will serve her, though certain she will prove ungrateful. My greatest Pleasure is to put the Gratitude of my Enemies to the Test. The frequent Conferences which the King honours me with, often afford me Opportunities to exercise this Humour. Your Son is very pretty. Take Care of your Health: 'Tis the chief Blessing next to Virtue.

* The Grand-daughter of Henry IV.

† Brother of Louis XIV.

LETTER XCH.

To the same.

June 14, 1679.

WE are born to suffer: Every Day of my Life is noted by some new Affliction. The King's Favours make me no Amends for the Loss of my Tranquility. I endeavour to bring him back to God: It would be a great Pity if so fine a Soul did not love him. He relates his Faults to me: I am his Confident; and Madam *de Montespan* is positive that I am his Mistress. But Madam, said I to her, he must then have three: Yes, answered she smartly, I am a nominal Mistress, that Girl is one in Fact, and you are Mistress of his Heart. I calmly represented to her, that she listen'd too much to her Resentments: She answered me, that she was no Stranger to my Artifices, and that her Unhappiness proceeded only from her not having given Ear to Resentment. She reflected on me on account of her Benefactions, her Presents, and those of the King; and told me that she had harbour'd a Serpent in her Bosom. 'Tis a strange Thing that we can neither live together, nor part: I love her, and cannot persuade myself that she hates me. I don't live, I die hourly.

LET-

L E T T E R XCIV.

*To the same.**August 2.*

Jealousies have ceased : Peace is made. It was indeed high Time that the King, after having given Peace to *Europe*, should give Peace to his Court. *Madam de Montespan* is more brilliant and more worshipped than ever : she caresses me, entrusts me with all her Schemes, consults me, and gives ear to me. The King of *Spain's* Marriage with *Mademoiselle* is agreed upon : There's a fine Match. They are making Preparations for Festivals, and all those Vanities which I have long been disgusted at, and forced to bear with. The Illness of the *Abbé Gobelin* has alarmed me : Entreat him to take Care of his Health, that we may not lose so good a Friend. *Mademoiselle* grows handsomer ; 'tis the Marriage. The King has said Abundance of fine Things to her in the most flattering Strain, and she has thanked me for it, as if I had a Hand in it.

LETTER XCV.

*To the same.**October 28.*

I THANK you for the fine Gown you have sent me : You could not have chosen me one more to my liking : I will wear it next *Sunday* in Honour of you. The Prince is the King's Idol : The more his Tenderneſs for the Son encreaſes, the more his Love for the Mother ſeems to decreaſe : 'Tis only a mere Fancy at preſent ; there is leſs Paſſion than Habit in it. The King abounds with good Sentiments ; He ſometimes reads the Bible, and thinks it the fineſt of all Books. He confeſſes his Weakneſſes to me, he acknowledges his Faults : We muſt wait for the Workings of Grace. He thinks ſeriouſly about the Converſion of Heretics, and in a little Time it will be proſecuted warmly.

LETTER XCVI.

*To Mademoiſelle de Lenclos.**Versailles, Nov. 12. 1679.*

CONTINUE, Mademoiſelle, to enlighten Mr. d'Aubigné with your Counſels. He has great need of the Leſſons of *Leontium* : The Advice of an amiable Friend is always more perſuaſive than the Counſels of an auſtere Siſter.

Madam

Madam *de Coulanges* has given me Assurances of your Friendship, which have greatly delighted me. What you hear of the Favour I am in, is nothing but an idle Report : I am a Stranger in this Place, with no other Support than People who dislike me, no Friends but self-interested ones, whom the slightest Blast of Fortune would turn against me, and no Relations but such as are continually asking, and not always deserving of Favours. You enjoy full Liberty ; I am in a continual Slavery. Believe me, my fair Damsel, for you will never cease to be handsome, the Intrigues of the Court are not near so agreeable as a Correspondence and Communication between Persons of Wit and Judgment. My Compliments to our old Friends. Madam *de Coulanges* and I toasted your Health yesterday at *Maintenon*, and we did not forget the Chamber of the Elect. Continue, I beseech you, your Kindness to *d'Aubigné*. I am, and ever shall be, your, &c.

L E T T E R XCVII.

To Madam de S. G——.

Dec. 18, 1679.

THE Court has been taken up with Brigues since the Beginning of this Month : They are now at an End. Madam *de Richelieu* has been

been appointed Lady of Honour.* The two Tirewomen are the Wife of the Marshal *de Rochefort*, who eagerly solicited for it, and ———, your Friend, who did not dream of it. This surely deserves a Compliment: I am going to part from Madam the Superintendant.† I shall be delivered from all the Vexations annexed to that wretched Condition: No more Quarrels, no more Reconciliations! The Princess is said to be very affable and pious; which is an exact Contrast to Madam *de Montespan*: She has congratulated me in such a Manner as to let me understand, that I am obliged to her for this Post: And yet I know it from a Man who cannot deceive, that I am indebted for it to none but God and the King.

L E T T E R XCVIII.

To the Abbé Gobelin.

St. Germain, Jan. 7, 1680.

I Send you the Account of my Alms. As for my Cloaths, I am going to change them, and get such as Madam *de Richelieu* wears. I am so indifferent about this Point, that nothing comes amiss to me. I have been clothed with Gold,

* Of *Victoria* of *Bavaria*, Dauphiness of *France*.

† Madam *de Montespan* bought this Year the Post of Superintendant of the Queen's Household, and almost forced the Countess of *Seissens* to sell it to her.
when

when I spent my Days in Pleasures with the King and his Mistress: Now that I am to be with a Princess, I shall always appear in black. Was I not at Court, I should dress like a * *Tou-riere*; and all these Changes give me no Uneasiness at all: I spend too much, because I am naturally neat, and little inclined to Avarice. In spite of my Inclination to lead a Life less gay and idle, I shall soon spend Part of it at the Opera, where sober Reflections may be made, but where, methinks, it is shameful to be seen at the Age of forty, and a Christian too. Pray to God to instill into you what I ought to do.

LETTER XCIX.

To the same.

MY Days are now pretty regular and very solitary. I pray to God as soon as I rise: I go to Mass twice on *Sundays* and Holidays, and once every other Day. I say my Office daily, and read a Chapter of some pious Book. I pray to God at going to Bed, and when I awake in the Night I say a *Laudate Dominum*, or a *Gloria Patri*. I think often of God in the Course of the Day, and make him an Offering of my Actions; I beg of him to remove me hence, if I

* A Maid that looks after the Turning-Box in a Nunnery.

am not working out my Salvation here. As to the rest, I don't know my Sins: I have good Morals and good Inclinations, and by the Help of these I do no great Harm: But I have a Desire to please and to be esteemed, which puts me upon my Guard against all my Passions. So that I can scarcely ever reproach myself with Deeds, but only with very humane Motives, great Vanity, much Levity and Dissipation of Mind, great Freedom of Thought and Judgment, and a Reserve in speaking that proceeds from nothing but human Prudence. This is the State of my Soul, as near as I can describe it: Prescribe the Remedies. I see no Probability of a speedy Retreat; therefore I must labour here in the Business of my Salvation: Pray contribute towards it as much as lies in your Power; and as it is the most essential of all Services, you may depend on the most perfect Gratitude.

L E T T E R C.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

July 6, 1680.

I Will speak for you to M. *Colbert*, however ill satisfied I may be with him: He will on that Account be the readier to grant my Request. You would be too rich, if you could leave off gaming and live regularly. Supposing Misfortunes should throw you into this Way of thinking,

(III)

ing, you would only do what all the World does: Vanity makes us value ourselves upon entertaining a contrary Notion; but it is immaterial by what Means we go to God. Speak neither well nor ill of the Favour I have risen to: Nothing borders so near upon Favour as Disgrace. Don't be vexed at any Thing you hear to my Prejudice. Some People are enraged, and only study to hurt me. If they don't succeed, we shall laugh at it; if they do, we will bear it courageously. Adieu, dear Brother, think of our former Condition, that we may deem ourselves happy in our present Station. During these first Days I must give constant Attendance on the Dauphiness. Be circumspect in your Conversation concerning me: Some People make you talk foolishly, and take Delight in repeating it to me. As to the rest, I am easy; I inure myself to every thing; we must take the Benefice with the Incumbrances.

L E T T E R C I.

To Madam de F——.*

August 19, 1680.

LOUVOIS has procured Madam de Montespan a Conference *tete à tete* with the King.

* I have been able to recover nothing but Fragments of the Letters to Madam de F——.

For

For some time past he was suspected of having such a Design; his Steps were observed; Opportunities were guarded against; Endeavours were used to break his Measures; but they were so well laid, that the King has at last fallen into the Snare. They are actually coming to Ecclaircissements, and Love alone is to preside in Council this Day. The King is resolute; but *Madam de Montespan* is very lovely when she weeps. The Dauphiness is at Prayers: Her Piety has put the King on making serious Reflections; but the Flesh in one Moment is sufficient to overthrow the Work of Grace. That Princess has made it a Point of Conscience to labour towards the King's Conversion: I am afraid she may grow too importunate, and make him hate Devotion. I beseech her to moderate her Zeal. She sometimes admits me to her pious Exercises; and I assure you that no Heart is more attached to God than hers. *Madam de la Valiere* is a very striking Example of the Power of Grace: The King willingly talks of her; and I cannot persuade myself that *Louvois* and *Madam de Montespan* will be able to erase those holy Impressions from his Mind.

LETTER

L E T T E R CII.

*To the same.**August 23, 1680.*

THAT Ecclaircissement has strengthened the King's Resolution: I have congratulated him on his Victory over so formidable an Enemy: He confesses that *Louvois* is a more dangerous Man than the Prince of *Orange*; but he is a necessary Man. *Madam de Montespan* wept at first, then fell to Reproaches, and at last talked arrogantly: She inveighed bitterly against me, according to Custom: Nevertheless, she has promised him to live in Harmony with me. For the Sake of her Honour she ought at least to save Appearances. *La Feuillade* has quarrelled with *Colbert*, and made his Peace with *Louvois*. The Prince of *Marillac* deceives the whole Court. The *Duchess du Lude* holds with the Majority. *Madam de Rochefort* is come into the pious Intentions of the *Dauphiness*. *Madam du Fresnoy* would fain persuade me that the King deceives me: But what Interest could he have in deceiving me? My Friends don't allow me Time to breathe: I am better pleased with the Discretion of my Relations. I expect you in two Days at *Maintenon*.

L E T -

LETTER CIII.

To the same.

I AM devoured with Grief: I flatter'd myself that Madam *de Montespan* would cease to persecute me, and that I might at last quietly promote my Salvation, in attending on a Princess who sets to all the Court an Example much more admired than followed. She has made up the Breach with the King: *Louvois* has done this. She has omitted nothing that might ruin me; she has drawn my Picture in the most frightful Colours. My God! thy Will be done! She came to me yesterday, and overwhelmed me with Reproaches and injurious Reflections: The King surprized us in the midst of a Dialogue that ended better than it began. He ordered us to embrace and love each other: You know this last Point is not to be commanded. He added, smiling, that it was easier for him to give Peace to *Europe* than to two Women, and that we took Fire about Trifles.

LETTER CIV.

To the same.

I Cannot see you: I shall go to *Maintenon*; the King wants to surprize me there one Day;
and

and that Day, perhaps, will be to-morrow or the next. I have not a Moment's Tranquility. The Dauphiness is in Retirement: I should not be here now, if her Devotion had not detained me. Pray to God for me: I never was so agitated, nor exposed to so many Conflicts.

LETTER CV.

To the same.

Octob. 10, 1680.

I Receive every Day new Favours from the King; but my Health, which is daily impaired, will not allow me to enjoy them long. The Loss of Tranquility counterbalances the Credit I acquire: I cannot bear this Way of living. The King is shy of me, and fears me: He heaps Benefits on me, in order to shut my Mouth; he loves Truth, and will not hear it. He lives in a Habit of mortal Sin that makes me tremble. I can no longer endure to see all these Doings. If the Scene does not change, I will withdraw: I am sure it is offending God to live with those who do nothing else but offend him. Piety contracts a certain Lukewarmness, without our being sensible of it. I should e'er now have been out of this Place, did I not apprehend that Passion and Spleen might contribute more to my withdrawing than a Desire to save my

my Soul. I sacrifice to God all that might fix me here, and I cannot resolve to complete this Sacrifice. The Piety of the Dauphiness confirms me in my good Thoughts, and destroys all my Projects.

LETTER CVI.

To the same.

I NEVER was more sensible how much I deceived myself: I am yet very far from the Freedom I aspire at. My Chains never were so heavy, nor so strong. I know not what to say to the Abbé Gobelin: I fear to lay my Heart open to him, because I dread the rendering myself guilty of an Obstinacy that would be offensive to God. I am a Patient that conceals the Distemper for fear of Remedies.

LETTER CVII.

HIS Speeches would grieve me much more sensibly, did I not know by whom they are dictated to him. I never had so much splendid Pleasure on the one Hand, nor so much Sorrow on the other. I have no settled Plan, because my Measures are daily disconcerted. I am so wretched, and have hitherto been so unhappy, that there is room to hope I shall not be spoiled by Prosperity.

LETTER

LETTER CVIII.

To the same.

I OBTAIN every Thing; but Envy makes the Purchase dear. My Heart is racked, and his is not in a better Condition. At the Age of Forty it is too late to seek to please; but Virtue is always in Season. All the Compliments you pass on my Intellects have been formerly bestowed on my Face. Those flattering Encomiums did not seduce me: Judge then whether I shall not be Proof against yours.

LETTER CIX.

To the same.

RUVIGNI is intractable: He has told the King that I was born a *Calvinist*, and remained so till my Appearance at Court. This engages me to approve of Things very opposite to my Sentiments: It is a long while since I have had none of my own: How happy should I be, had I made a Sacrifice of them to God!

LETTER CX.

To the same.

GOD only knows the Truth. He gives me the fairest Hopes, but I am too old to rely on them. Though Madam *de Montpesan* was, it is a great while

while since I have been taken by that weak Side :
And yet this is not a Place to acquire Fortitude
in.—I send him away always sorrowful, but
never desponding *.

LETTER CXI.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

Stenay, Jan. 1, 1681.

HERE is M. de Louvois's Order: You'll be
satisfied with my Diligence, and shall
always be so in every thing that may lie in my
Power. My Equipage is going to *Versailles*,
and nobody is better served than I. M. *Bon-*
tems takes Care of my Apartment; so that I
shall find it in good Order. I send your Wife
a fine Cushion, which the Princess of *Harcourt*
has brought me from *Spain*. I think of chang-
ing my Livery: That is proper. You are un-
reasonable in desiring me to ask of the King,
while he is loading me with Riches, Honours,
and every thing that can make Life agreeable:
I never will ask him for any thing; and I now
only think of serving him in the Person of my
Mistress with such Zeal, Fidelity, and Assiduity,
as may manifest my Gratitude. Get ready my

* This Passage is quoted in the 26th Chapter of
Voltaire's Age of *Louis XIV.* by which we find that
this and the foregoing Letters, to the 101st inclusive,
were wrote to her Cousin, Madam de *Frontenac*.

Lodging in *Paris* : You must buy me gilt Chimney Utensils, and let the Grate be very large ; for I love a great Fire preferably to all other Conveniencies. Send in a Looking-glass from your House. There is no need to buy quite new every where ; and whilst I have *Maintenon* furnished, why should I also furnish at *Paris*, where I shall so seldom be ? I wish you a happy New Year, and a Christian Life and Death.

LETTER CXII.

To Madam d'Aubigné.

Jan. 3, 1681.

MY dear Child, I daily beg of God that he would lead you into his holy Ways. Such Prayers are not commonly made in the World : I make them in the midst of the Court, and thoroughly experience the Truth of these Words of *St. Bernard*, *God only can satisfy the Heart of Man*. Believe me, dear Child, all those Pleasures, which you fancy so delightful, and which you perhaps long for, are nothing but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit. Love your Husband, and you will be happy. Dispel his Melancholy by your Chearfulness. You know how much I love you ; make me love you more. Don't keep Company with *Madam de L*—— ; that does you a Prejudice in the World : Be circum-

spect

spect in your Connections; make no new ones; know before you love. I am your Sister, your Mother, your Friend.

LETTER CXIII.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

May 19, 1681.

I ENJOY great Tranquility in consequence of the Resolution I have taken to receive no more Visits. My Tenderness will suffer for it; but I found so much Inconveniency in the Exceptions I made, that I thought it best to resolve to put all upon a Level. I am exposed to some Grumbling about it; but that is not so bad as the ill Turns they did me before. I heartily wish that your Capucin could convert you: You would be the happier for it in this World and the next. The Pregnancy of the Dauphiness being declared, all the intended Journies are laid aside. The King had a Fall yesterday as he was hunting. You may well suppose that every body was alarmed in Proportion to his Friendship: He got no Hurt at all. You must have seen my dear little Prince: My Fondness for him does not decrease. I fancy no *Hugonots* will be left in *Poitou* except our Relations: Don't repine at your Fortune: You were born a Gentleman and without a Farthing: Now you
are

are in a delightful Place, with a yearly Income of above fifteen thousand Livres: Compare Notes, and you'll think yourself happy. You have Sense and Reputation, and a young sweet temper'd Wife: I am daily embellishing a fine Country Seat for you and your Children. You have done your Duty in your Youth: Spend your old Age in Joy and Peace; enjoy all Things, be a Man of Probity, and prepare for Death as gayly as you can. Don't give yourself up to Melancholy; and remember that you carry in your own Breast the Enemy of your Tranquility and Happiness. Tell your Lady the oftener she writes to me, the more I shall love her, provided she does not insist upon a regular Correspondence from me. I am very busy, and more slothful to write than ever I was. But my Indolence must not deprive me of your Wife's Letters; besides, 'twill form her Stile; for the more we write, the better we write.

L E T T E R CXIV.

To Madam de S. G——.

Versailles, August 24, 1681.

THE King thinks seriously of his Salvation, and of that of his Subjects: If God preserves him, there will be but one Religion in the Kingdom; 'tis the Opinion of M. de Lou-
G
vois,

vois, and I rather believe *him* on this Head than *Colbert*, who thinks of nothing but his Schemes, and never of Religion. The little Girl has wept much : One cannot conceive what Chimeras those People put into Childrens Heads ; but she was so taken with the King's Mass, that she promised me to become Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman, provided I would promise to let her hear it every Day. This Simplicity occasioned much laughing ; but I cannot help lamenting that the other Conversions will not so easily be made. *M. de la Villedieu* has resisted that Eloquence of *M. Bossuet* which nobody can. God grant that when he returns he may prove more tractable and docible ! Methinks there is nothing wanting to my Felicity but the Conversion of my Family. *M. de Ruvoign* will have it that I am still a Calvinist in my Heart : He is as intoxicated with his Religion as a Minister.

LETTER CXV.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

St. Germain, Feb. 10, 1682.

I HAVE received your melancholy Letter, but I am too well acquainted with the Vapours to take fright at it. Their usual Effect is to make one fancy Death is at Hand : But that Effect is corrected by their keeping it a long while in View.

This

This is what *M. Fagon* has often told me. I should, however, scruple to endeavour at driving such Thoughts entirely out of your Head: It is good to prepare for Death, especially when one has long Accounts to make up: 'Tis with this we ought to be occupied, and not about what will happen after we are dead. I will send you our Genealogy, as soon as I get it in order. I should be glad to know who *M. de Cardillac* was; this is the darkest Thing I find 'n it. For your Vapours I advise you to divert yourself, to be never alone, to eat sparingly and often, to take the Air on Horseback, and especially not to dream lolling in a Chair, as I fancy I now see you. Adieu; you will never be happy nor well with God, if you don't live well together.

LETTER CXVI.

To the same.

YOU know I meddle too little with Affairs, to think of getting *Madam de* ——— a Place about the Dauphiness. I will believe *Madam de Miossens* in all Things, as an Article of Faith, except in Matters of Religion; for I know that in her Religion they never forgive those that forsake it. *Madam de St. Hermine* is setting out with her Sisters: They have all made

a fine Resistance, and a fine Retreat. Every body is gone to the Ball, and I am alone in my Chamber, which is my great Delight. They ought surely to bear with me: My quiet and solitary Life is agreeable to my Humour. You have wrote me a Letter full of Thanks, and I desire to have none: All I wish is, for you to be content, and make a good Use of the Blessings you receive: They are not inexhaustible; and all may end, you know how. I will send you a Seal; but I highly disapprove of your affecting to have the Arms of your Grandmother's Mother; for 'tis from thence the *St. Hermine*s are descended. I could not behold without Pleasure a Genealogy of four hundred Years, fully proved by Marriage Contracts: 'Tis learning very late what we are; but that is never indifferent: M. d'Albret told me something of it twelve Years ago.

LETTER CXVII.

To the Abbé Gobelin.

St. Germain, June 20, 1682.

THE Pleasure of seeing the most amiable and most Christian King at Mass, cannot fail you when you come hither, no more than that of viewing the Simplicity of my Chamber: Would to God there was as much Simplicity in

my Heart, and that, besides what I don't see in it, I did not discover Reccesses that may corrupt what Good is in me. I am charmed to see all the World praise what the King does: I earnestly wish that he would ascribe all the Glory of it to God. You will soon hear of a new * Establishment very useful to the poor Noblesse. A † *Flemming* has given the Model of a Machine for *Marli*, which will be one of the Wonders of the World. Pray to God for me.

LETTER CXVIII.

To the same.

IF the Queen had such a Director as you, one might hope for all the Good imaginable from the Union and Harmony in the Royal Family: But they find it exceeding hard, in the Article of the *Media nocte*, to persuade her Confessor, who conducts her in a Road fitter for a Carmelites than for a Queen. I know that some have cavilled at the last Benefit you received from the King: But what has vexed me, is, that you did appear so concerned at their Reflections, which I think are very ill grounded. Don't be alarm'd about my Health; a little Matter serves to make

* The Academy of Cadets for Sea and Land Service, founded the 22d of *June*.

† *De Villa*, an Artist of *Liege*.

a Noise, because I am on the Theatre. I have had the Vapours, and what I have suffered of late has a little disorder'd my Health. Get a *New Testament, An Imitation of Christ, An Introduction to a Devout Life,* and your Book on the *Mass*, bound for me. I recommend myself to your Prayers. I have a great longing to mind my Salvation; but Pride and Sloth give me a great deal of Trouble: Write me Word how I must wrestle with such Enemies. Adieu; no Uneasiness about my Health. I am very well; I am content, and too much so for my Salvation; I have great Need of Strength to make a good Use of my Prosperity.

LETTER CXIX.

To Madam de S. G——.

August 7, 1682.

WE are extremely joyful here. The King has made a very handsome Compliment to the Dauphiness; he held the little * Prince a Moment in his Arms; he has congratulated the Dauphin as a Friend; the Queen had the first Intelligence of it from his own Mouth; In short, he is an adorable Man. Madam de Montespan grows lean upon our Joy: She pines away with Jealousy; every thing displeases her, every thing

* The Duke of Burgundy, born the 6th of August.

is

is troublesome to her: She says that the Lying-
in of others are as fatal to her as her own: She
gives full Vent to her Passion against Father
la Chaise, who does nothing but his Duty,
but does it now better than ever. We live with
all the Appearances of a sincere Friendship.
Some say I want to step into her Place, not
knowing my Aversion to such Things, nor the
Aversion I instil into the King: Others imagine
I conspire with her. Some think I am for bring-
ing her back to God: I earnestly wish it, but
have little Reason to hope for it. There is a
Heart better formed, made for Heaven, on which
I ground greater Hopes. Adieu; mention no-
thing of all this: Enough of it is guessed it.

LETTER CXX.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

October 6, 1682.

FOLLOW the Counsels I have given you. I have
had the Vapours so often, that I am become
a very good Judge in those Cases. I am afraid
of your Inclination to Solitude, than which
nothing can be worse for your Distemper: Dis-
agreeable Company is better than none. The
King has been received at *Maintenon* by *Ninon*
and *Frances*, who behaved extremely well on
that Occasion: I was gone from thence two

Hours before he arrived. He calls it a very pretty Seat. I have set up a Manufactory there, which affords me great Amusement: I have brought thither some *Normans* and *Flemmings*, to make coarse and fine Linen. I am ever oppressed with Vapours, and spend the Days in weeping, stifling my Grief, and thinking myself the most unfortunate Person living. It is true the Queen has honour'd me with a Present of her Picture; but 'tis better not to talk of such Things: Favour, in my Opinion, is not more becoming than Modesty. Don't be uneasy at my sending you no Particulars: You'll hear Chat enough about me; the greatest Princes on Earth are talked of: I wish you would be, on this Head, as much unconcern'd as I am. Adieu, dear Brother, think of your Salvation; there is nothing good in comparison with this.

LETTER CXXI.

To *Madam de S. G*—.

Maintenon, Nov. 1, 1682.

THE Royal Family live in quite an edifying Unity. The King converses whole Hours with the Queen. The Gift she has made me of her Picture is the most agreeable Incident that has happened to me since my being at Court: 'Tis, in my Way of thinking, a superlative Distinction.

Distinction. *Madam de Montespan* never had any thing like it. I shall spend a Fortnight longer here: This Solitude is a Relaxation from the Fatigues of the great World: I receive no Visits here, but am constantly among my Workmen; this is my Empire. I am torn to Pieces on all Hands: Time will clear up every Thing. I beg that you would not vindicate me, which only serves to sour my Enemies. *Madam de Miramions* is indiscreetly zealous: Friends are better served by Calmness. I lead a Life chequered with Infirmities and Sorrows. They think me in the best Post in the World, and I find no greater Pleasure than in withdrawing from it, and living in Solitude. *Desire d'Aubigné* not to give Way to his Indolence: With three hundred thousand Livres a Year he would not be happier: His Misfortune is in his Blood.

LETTER CXXII.

From the King to Madam de Maintenon.

YES, *Madam*, I have loved *Rantanges* more than God himself. I acknowledge my Fault: I thank you for your wise Counsels; I have read them over thrice. *Louvois* will tell you my Resolutions; confide entirely in him. Promise the Queen, that from henceforth I will mind Business more than my Pleasures. Adieu, my dear *Madam de Maintenon*.

LETTER CXXIII.

From the same to the same.

GOD punishes me, Madam ; I submit to his Will : I have often given that bright Soul great Cause of Discontent. Don't be absent, my dear Madam de Maintenon : I have need of your Consolations : You may withdraw whenever you are tired of telling me the Truth.

LETTER CXXIV.

To the King.

SIRE,

THE Queen is not to be lamented ; she lived and died like a Saint : 'Tis a great Comfort to have such an Assurance of her Salvation. You have now, Sire, a Friend in Heaven, who will beg of God to forgive your Sins, and pour down upon you the Blessings of the Righteous. Let your Majesty derive Comfort from these Sentiments. The Dauphiness's Health is on the mend. Be, Sire, as good a Christian as you are a great King.

LET-

LETTER CXXV.

*To Mr. d'Aubigné.**Fontainebleau, August 7, 1683.*

THE general Affliction, and my own in particular, do not hinder me from answering your Letter, since you stand so much in need of it. 'Tis owing to your Vapours, that Objects appear to you with so gloomy an Aspect. The Misfortune of having no Children sits very light on all the World; and you have too much Sense to care whether your Name be extinct or not. Were you to come hither, you should not see me; and the Reason that forbids it is so useful and so honourable, that you ought indeed to rejoice at it. It is better to carry on a literary Correspondence with me, than to be on the Spot without seeing me. If the King has not done you justice, and if your Enemies have wrong'd you, 'tis a very common Misfortune. You are old; you have no Children; you are infirm: What do you stand in need of, but Rest, Freedom, and Piety? All these Blessings are in our own Hands. You have upwards of thirty thousand Livres a Year; you shall have more shortly, if I am in this World; when I am gone, you'll have *Maintenon*. You have room to believe that I am
grieved

grieved at the Queen's Death; nobody has more Reasons to be so, and I feel them very sensibly: The King's Grief terribly encreases mine.

LETTER CXXVI.

To the same.

Fontainebleau, Sept. 7, 1683.

YOU have no doubt heard, that before we were comforted for the Loss of the Queen, we have been alarmed about the King, and thought his Arm was broke: It was only dislocated, and, God be praised, it is now well. This Accident has shewn that he has as much Fortitude under Pain, as in his other Actions; and there is but little Difference between his Unconcern and that of the Philosopher, who said, *Did I not tell you that you would break my Leg?* You may guess from my good Humour that the King is in good Health. M. Colbert is dead: M. Pelletier succeeds him. I exhort you to live elegantly: Spend the Eighteen thousand Livres arising from the Affair we have compassed; when that is gone we may do some other Jobb: It is only in the Business of our Salvation that we must curb our Passions and Appetites. I love you more than your Children; they shall have my Fortune. The longer I live the plainer I see the Folly of toiling and projecting for Futurity. Such Projects are almost al-
ways

ways defeated by divine Providence; for as they are very seldom form'd with good Intentions, God does not give a Blessing to them. I grow a very relaxed and good temper'd old Woman. Spend your Income, and let your Wife partake of it. God will make Provision for all Necessities, provided you serve him. Prepare for Death without being melancholy at the Thoughts of it.

LETTER CXXVII.

To Madam de S. G——.

Fontainbleau, Sept. 10.

THE King is in good Health, and feels nothing now but a slight Pain. He has been grieved for the Death of *Colbert*, and many have rejoiced at his Affliction. The pernicious Designs attributed to that Minister are but idle Tales, and the King has very cordially forgiven him for having resolved to die without reading his Letter. *Seignelay* has begg'd his Posts, and obtained none of them: He has Parts, but little Conduct: his Pleasures always take Place of his Duties. He has so highly exaggerated the Talents and the Services of his Father, that he has convinced all the World he is neither worthy nor capable to succeed him. Our Friend has been talked of for the Place of Superintendant

of

of the Royal Edifices, but only during the Space of two Minutes: *Louvois* has got it without asking for it. I have great Hopes of *M. Pelletier*, and with a secret Pleasure perceive that the Court is satisfied with this Choice: The King has an Esteem for him. *Madam de Rochefort* saves Appearances at least: Her Conversion is ascribed to me; but for my Part I cannot endure to have any Body's Hypocrisy attributed to me: The Dauphiness cannot relish her Ways. We are very tranquil here: *Madam de Montespan* has run into the deepest Devotion: It is high Time for her to edify us. I think no more of retiring: The King has made me promise not to leave him.

LETTER CXXVIII.

To *Mr. d'Aubigne*.

Sept. 28.

I HAVE shewn the King what you wrote to me concerning his Accident: This Day he leaves off the Scarff, and is, thank God, in perfect Health. I have enclosed the Answer of *M. Pelletier*, who returns your Letter, because you therein stile him *Monseigneur*, an Honour which he will not receive from any one. Make yourself merry, but let your Mirth be innocent. Think of the next Life; and let us prepare for the

the Passage thither with as much Confidence as possible. Do good Works; but remember, that Duties must be discharged first, and that yours is to cheer up and love the Wife whom God has given you. Read St. *Paul's* Epistles; he will tell you that the Strong must bear with the Weak, and that you and your Wife are but one. I believe that the Queen has begg'd of God the Conversion of the whole Court: The King's Conversion is worthy of Admiration; and the Ladies that seem'd most averse to it are now constantly at Church. No female Devotees are more assiduous there than *Madam de Montespan*: The common Sundays are kept with as much Devotion as *Easter* was formerly.

LETTER CXXIX.

To the same.

Oct. 6, 1683.

MAKE it a Penance and a Practice of Virtue to bear with the Humours of your Wife: It is God that has joined you. As for the rest, think of nothing but to cheerful, and save your Soul: These two Things are not incompatible. I am not surprized that you have already spent the eighteen thousand Livres which you should receive at the End of this Year; but I wonder you could think the Farmers-General ought

ought to pay you beforehand: 'Tis what the King never will order them to do: All that is in my Power, is to desire M. *Brunet*, as my particular Friend, to oblige you. I anxiously wait for the News of your Wife's Delivery: I am indifferent enough about the Sex; I have some Reasons for it. I am much concerned about the War: The King is to set out for the Army the 10th of *April*: That is yet indeed at a great Distance; but my Friendship for him makes it present to me. Adieu; be persuaded, that whether sick or well, negligent or careful, in Favour or Disgrace, I am ever the same to you. Comfort yourself for the Delay of your Wife's Lying-in. Heroes are at least ten Months in their Mothers Womb.

LETTER CXXX.

To Madam de S. G——.

Nov. 13, 1683.

WHAT think you of Marshal *d'Humieres*? The King is charmed with his Conduct; and the Surrender of *Dixmude* crowns his Joy: We reckoned here upon a vigorous Defence. Madam de *Montespan* appears unconcern'd at all these Accounts, and is solely intent upon her Salvation: We never have any private Interviews, and that is best for us both. I know she has told the King that I had taken it into my Head

to rule her, and I likewise know, that she has had no Reason to be satisfied with the King's Answer: Of all his Court he is the Man that has the most Sense, and is least liable to be caught in such Snares. We could never have dared to hope that all those Conversions would prove so easy: * *Pelisson* does Wonders. *M. Bossuet* is more learned, but the other more persuasive. Pray, tell my Sister-in-law, that she will add ten Years to my Life, if she checks her Petulance a little; tell her, if she loves me, she will bear more patiently her Husband's passionate Flights: Tell her also, that if she loves the Fruit of her Womb, she will be afraid of making it of an uneven and hasty Temper. Set before her the Example of the Dauphiness, whose Tranquility and Precautions in her Pregnancy are admirable.

LETTER CXXXI.

To the same.

Dec: 20, 1683.

A Dauphin, a Duke of *Burgundy*, a Duke of *Anjou*! this is certainly a great Comfort. The King has given a Loose to all the Tenderness of a Father. Religion does not extinguish. By what Means he wrought upon the Protestants of *France* may be seen in *Voltaire's* Age of *Louis XIV.* Chap. 32.

these

these Affections; it refines upon them. The Dauphiness has had a pretty easy Labour; and this is looked upon here as a happy Prefage. This Morning the King did me the Honour to assist at my Toilet; you plainly see I grow young again: My little Prince has, in a very pretty Manner, told me so. The Abbé de Fenelon is much esteemed here; and yet every body does not do him Justice: They are shy of him; and he wants to be loved, as he has all the Qualities requisite to gain Affection. *Seignelay* is inconsolable; Ambition preys upon his Spirits: The King is very happy to have Ministers ready to sacrifice themselves out of Spight for his Service: *Louvois* begins at last to grow troublesome to him, and is not sensible of it. Every one thinks of his own Business, and I mind my spiritual Concerns. I am very well pleased with Father *la Chaise*: He inspires the King with great Thing. In a little Time all his Subjects will serve God in Spirit and in Truth. I have formed a Design to educate, along with a little Villette, some young Ladies of *Hugonot* Parents: It will be a good Work. Let me have your Opinion of it. The King has conferred a Benefice on the Abbé *Gobelin*.

L. E. T.

LETTER CXXXII.

*To Mr. d'Aubigné.**May 5, 1684.*

I Congratulate you on the safe Delivery of my Sister-in-law: I already feel a Tenderneſs for my Niece. Pray, let her not be an only one, that I may have *her* with me when *ſome other Child* ſhall amuſe you. I am told you go to ſee her ſeveral Times in a Day; that's well done: But let her ſleep; take care of her Eyes; take care of Accidents. For my Part, I had rather ſee her dead than deformed. I am not devout, dear Brother, but have an Inclination to be ſo: I am perſuaded it is the Source of all Good. I am indeed but too much talked of, ſometimes well, ſometimes ill: I have always heard it ſaid, that Women ought to wiſh to be forgotten. I leave you at full Liberty in regard to what you write to me about: It would be very unjuſt in me to make Uſe of my Credit to tyrannize over an elder Brother, to whom I naturally owe Reſpect. Be a good Huſband, a good Father, and a good Maſter; but firſt of all be a good Chriſtian, and of Courſe you'll be all the reſt. I tell you, by Way of Confidence, that I take in young Ladies at *Noizy*, whoſe Board the King pays for: Judge of my Satisfaction when I am
returning

returning along the Avenue followed by 124 Damsels, the Number at present there: I employ my Time in furnishing them with every thing they want. I can but seldom go to *Maintenon*; *M. de Louvois* arrived from thence yesterday; he takes such Care of it as turns to very good Account; he has rebuilt the Castle of the Park; and I look after my young Ladies. We grow old; let us think of dying: Can that be grievous to a Christian?

LETTER CXXXIII.

To the King.

SIRE,

ONE Day's Absence of your Majesty is an Age to me. I am persuaded of your Sentiments; but I cannot live quietly at a Distance from you. I place all my Happiness, all the Pleasures of Life, in seeing your Majesty: I leave you then to judge of my Uneasiness. After so many Benefits and so many Honours I have received from you, I know not yet what my Lot is to be: But I tremble, and am extremely agitated in writing this Billet to your Majesty; and God grant it may not be a Fore-sight of what I dread most in this World! Death would be a thousand Times more welcome to me. You have promised me, Sire, a

sincere

Sincere and lasting Conversion to God; I rely entirely on your Word: I am encouraged thereby; I blame my Suspicions, my Credulity: But if——the rest is wanting.

LETTER CXXXIV.

To Madam de S. G——.

Maintenon, June 4, 1684.

I Am here waiting for News of the King with great Impatience. I very well know there is nothing to fear for his Life, his Health, nor his Glory; but still I fear, and Reason does not cure me of this Folly. He covers the Siege of *Luxembourg*, and has condescended to share the Honour of this Conquest with *Créqui*. I long for nothing but Peace: I will never give the King Counsels prejudicial to his Glory; but if they would take my Advice, Men would be less ambitious, less dazzled with the *Eclat* of Victories, and would think more seriously of their Salvation. But it is not my Province to govern the State: I daily pray to God that he would inspire and direct the Master of it, bring him to the Knowledge of the Truth, and give him pacific Sentiments. I love the King in the same Manner as I love my Brother: I wish to see them perfect, that they might be more worthy of God. His Majesty has wrote me two
very

very affectionate Letters, and I have answered them like a Christian: Noizy finds me a great deal of very agreeable Occupation; I will also on my Part contribute to the great Work of converting our separated Brethren: Those poor Girls will be infinitely obliged to me for it, both in this World and in the next: Some of them are very lovely, and these not always the handsomest. *Le Notre* has turned my Garden into a charming Spot. The Dauphiness took a Walk in it yesterday, and was infinitely delighted. I hope to have died there, but shall not even have the Pleasure of living in it.

LETTER CXXXV.

To the same.

August 13 1684.

THE King has at last taken Measures for a Peace: His Ministers at *Ratisbon* are ordered to sign a Truce of twenty Years; and he is to keep all that he has taken since the Peace of *Nimeguen*: This Treaty, in my Opinion, is very advantageous, and the King is well satisfied with it. He intends to set about a total Conversion of the Heretics: He has frequent Conferences on this Subject with M. *Le Tellier* and *Chateauneuf*, where I am not one too many. *Chateauneuf* has proposed improper Methods: Matters

Matters ought not to be managed hastily: We ought to convert, and not persecute. *Louvois* is for Lenity, though it does not accord with his cholerick, impetuous Temper. The King is ready to do every thing that may best promote the Cause of Religion. This Undertaking will render him glorious in the Sight of God and Man, as it will bring all his Subjects into the Pale of the Church, and prove the Destruction of Heresy, which all his Predecessors could not conquer. I have not been able to preserve the Friendship of *Madam de la Fayette*; she set too high a Price on the Continuance of it: However I have shewn her that I was as sincere and as obstinate as herself. 'Tis the Duke that has set us at Variance: We have formerly quarrelled about Trifles.

LETTER CXXXVI.

To Mr. d'Aubigne.

June 9, 1685.

I LEAD the Life you hear of: I go sometimes to *Noizy*, sometimes to *St. Cyr*, where the Work advances incredibly: My Apartment will soon be tenantable; the Refectory is finished. *Mr. de Marcell* vexes me exceedingly, and only because he will not speak in the Fashion; he besets my Door, and they won't do any thing for him.

him. The King goes a Hunting as often as he can; but you know his Pleasures are not followed till Business is done. The Dauphin also takes the Diversion of Hunting. The Stag will lead him one of these Days to *Maintenon*. *M. de Louvois* returned from thence yesterday, charmed with the Facilities he finds for his Aqueduct: *Vauban* says it will cost less than was imagined, but that he had been two Months without conceiving it practicable. Things will take a Turn for the Benefit of our Heirs: Upon my Word you ought to get one more. *Maintenon* has made me run into a short Digression: Let us return to the Royal Family. The Dauphiness is grieved for the Death of her Brother, and at seeing the Electorate gone from his House. *Mademoiselle* often sees me when she is here, but her Stay in this Place is shorter than formerly. The Prince of *Condé* and * *Monfieur Le Duc* are in high Spirits at the Marriage of the Duke of *Bourbon* with † *Mademoiselle de Nantes*, to which the King adds every thing, both useful and agreeable, that they can wish for. *Madam de Montespan* often sees me, and is to take me along with her to *Clugny*: *Jane* is afraid I may not be

* Grandson of the great *Condé*.

† Natural Daughter of *Louis XIV.* by *Madam de Montespan*.

in Safety there. The King sometimes takes a Walk in private with the Princess of *Conti* and me. That Princess inclines intirely to Good. The Doge of *Genoa* beholds the King and the Nation with Amazement : I have seen him no where but from my Window ; but he has passed by it so often, that one might have imagined there was an Understanding between us. *M. de Roquelaure* made no brilliant Figure at the last Caroufel : Do you know that *M. de Murcé* was very near winning the Prize, and that the King said he was one of the most dextrous ; which is more than I knew before.

LETTER CXXXVII.

From the King to Madam de Maintenon.

THIS is too hot a Day for Hunting ; therefore I shall not stir out till Evening, to take a Walk with you, if you please. Don't come if it be inconvenient to you.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

August 5, 1685.

I AM very sorry to hear you complain of a Person with whom you must spend your Days, and whom God has given you : 'Tis a continual Opportunity of acquiring Merit in his

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Sight,

Sight, and much more essential than giving all we have to the Poor. It is true that the King often gives Entertainments, and that I am present at them as seldom as I can. I cannot sit up late without being disordered ; nor will I give Mademoiselle de Poitiers room to call me, as she did Mademoiselle d'Hudicourt, a fine Festival-Face. Marli is much frequented now : I returned from thence yesterday, just as the Diversions were ready to begin, preferring my Repose to Pleasures. I have placed at Noizy the Relation you sent me : Is it possible for you to think her pretty ? This makes me tremble for my Neice : I care not whether she is very beautiful ; but I must own I would not have her be ugly. The King is to go to Chambord : He will lie at Chartres, and I also : We shall stop there all the next Day, to perform our Devotions, and that the King may view a few more of the Works. They are flating St. Cyr, and laying the Floor of my Apartments. The King will afterwards proceed to Chambord.

LETTER CXXXIX.

To the same.

Chambord, October 1.

CHAMBORD is a charming Place : Tomorrow we leave it, with great Reluctance, both

both in the Courtiers and myself. Go and see *Versailles*, tho' you will find it in great Disorder : You have too good a Taste not to admire it, and know the World too well, not to send me an Account of what you may have most admired. Depend upon it, my dear Brother, that Divine Providence, which directs even the minuteſt of our Actions, has not brought you to *Paris* to ſee the Opera. Look out there for ſome virtuous Man that may conduct you to God ; viſit the Abbé *Gobelin* and Father *Bourdaloue* : There are but few Men of ſound Knowledge to be found. Madam *de St. Hilaire* has made a fine End : I will take her youngeſt Daughter : The eldeſt is not young enough ; I have firmly reſolved to receive none of her Age : I ſhall thereby give Diſguſt to many ; but it is better to do ſo, than to ſtop in ſo glorious a Project. The King is ſatisfied with your Conduct ; but that is not enough ; God muſt be ſo too ; and he is not harder to pleaſe than Men.

LETTER CXL.

To the Abbé Gobelin

Sept. 25, 1685.

I Entreated you to go to *Noizy*, and now repeat the ſame Requeſt. Madam *de Brinon*, notwithstanding ſhe is a Woman of good Senſe, ſtands

in need of Advice. Pray, let me know whether there is an absolute Necessity for going through a Noviciate, previous to the being admitted into that Community, I say now, that a quite new one is to be formed; for I well know that hereafter the Girls must be a Year or two upon Trial, if judged proper: But as there is yet no Incorporation, ought they to perform their Noviciate? And can they enter upon it before the House is established? You have made me a valuable Present in giving me *Madam La Maisonfort*; she does Wonders. As for *Madam* —, whatever Cause she may lately have had to rejoice, there is more Melancholy in *her* Mirth than in the Sorrow of *others*: For the future we shall receive none but Maiden Ladies.

LETTER CXLI.

To the same.

Sept. 30, 1685.

TURN your Thoughts, I beseech you, to this Establishment only; since God and the King having charged me with the Direction of it, you ought to help me to acquit myself well. You cannot too much preach up Humility to our Candidates: I am much afraid that *Madam de Brinon* may have inspired them with a certain Loftiness, and that the Vicinity of the Court, a
 Royal

Royal Foundation, Visits from the King, and even my Visits, may give them a Notion of being Canoneſſes and Ladies of Importance; which would be an Obſtacle to the Good we intend to do. There is a Medium to be adopted between a proud Devotion and the Miſeries and Meanneſſes of Convents. I know not by what Name they are to be called: In the Conſtitutions, *Madam de Brinon* ſtiles them *the Ladies of St. Louis*; which cannot be allowed, for the King does not canonize himſelf; and 'tis he that names them, as he is their Founder. Their Garments are to be black, without Hair, and without any Ornament; ſuch a Dress as *St. Paul* requires in Chriſtian Widows.

LETTER CXLII.

To *Madam de S. G*——.

Oct. 9, 1685.

TIS a very agreeable Sight to me, to behold two hundred young Ladies brought up under my Care. The Abbatial Manſion of *St. Dennis* is to be united to *St. Cyr*, and the King will give thirty thouſand Livres, 'till he aſſigns a Fund out of the Farms. I very well know what is ſaid about its Vicinity to the Court; but can I hinder my Enemies from prating? The Journey to *Chambord* has not been uſeleſs:

The Fruit of it will soon appear; and those who say that the King minds nothing but Festivals and Pleasures, will be confounded. I don't concern myself with any Business, except that of *Noizy*; but this is allowed me, 'tis my Work. *M. de Villette* has at last taken the right Side of the Question, and assured the King, that it is the only Thing he ever did without a View to please him. The *Abbé Gobelin* is here, and will take charge of this Letter.

LETTER CXLIII.

To *Mr. d'Aubigné*.

OR. 20.

INDEED, Brother, you are not excuseable, as you have so much Esteem for me, in declining to be guided by my Counsels in a Place which I am better acquainted with than yourself. The Thing is done, and you must only think how to mend the Blunder: I shall say you were suddenly taken ill, and hastened back to *Paris*: You must come again in five or six Days: This Behaviour will appear natural; whereas there was too much Singularity in the other. For who can imagine, that a fond Brother, who had not seen me these five Years, could come to look upon me a Quarter of an Hour, and then run away, without any Notice, or even speaking a Word?

Word? Behave better, mind my Advice; no Slips of this Kind are looked upon as Trifles here. Be sparing of being in Company with Madam de Montespan and M. de Lauzun; it will give room to say that you herd among the Malecontents. Visit M. Gobelin and Father Bourdaloue. Come hither at All Saints; you'll see the King perform his Devotions, which is a Lesson to the greatest Libertines. Adieu; I took Delight in seeing you this Day, a Cavalcade of the Court Ladies, and a Ball this Evening. If you would take my Advice, your Life would be pleasant; but you have not Confidence enough in me. What you have been told of the last hunting Match is true: The Wild Boar was furious; had not the King lifted up his Leg in the Nick of Time, it had been torn: The Duke de Villeroy was pulled off his Horse: Judge then of the Pleasure I found in this Diversion. Just so it is in divers Stations which are envied, and which have their vexatious sides. Tell Nanny that I have wrote her an Answer, and shall be extremely glad to see her.

H 4. LET.

LETTER CXLIV.

To Madam de S. G—

Oct. 25, 1685.

IT is true that the Dauphiness pretends to be pregnant, but gives no Proofs of it: The Physician has told the King so. The Mansion of *St. Dennis* brought the Cardinal *de Retz* an hundred thousand Livres on the Demefne of the Generality of *Paris*: This Point is settled; the Patent will contain an Exemption from all Duties and Taxes. I am overwhelmed with Sollicitations: Candidates come to us from all Quarters, but few good ones. The King would have me to be very difficult at the Beginning, because the Community being once well established, all Things will go on easily afterwards. *M. Le Tellier* is at the Point of Death; after he had signed the * *Edict* he was better; but the Fever has seized him again with great Violence, and now his Life is despaired of. The King is highly pleased with having put the finishing Hand to the great Work of bringing the Heretics into the Church. Father *la Chaise* has promised that it will not cost one Drop of Blood, and *Louvois* says the same. I am very glad that

* That which revoked the *Edict* of *Nantz*.

the

the Heretics in *Paris* have listened to Reason :
Claude was a seditious Fellow that confirmed
 them in their Errors : Since they have lost him,
 they are more tractable. I am indeed of your
 Opinion, that all these Conversions are not alike
 sincere ; but God makes use of every Means to
 draw Heretics to him : At least their Children
 will be Catholics. If the Fathers are Hypocrites,
 their outward Conformity is at least an Ap-
 proach towards the Truth : They have the Signs
 of it in common with the Faithful. Pray to
 God that he would enlighten them all : The
 King has nothing more at Heart. *Du Quesne* is
 not to go to *Holland* nor to *England*. *M. de*
Schomberg is less useful and more obstinate.

LETTER CXLV.

To the Abbé Gobelin.

Jan. 7, 1686.

I HAVE received your New-Year's-Gift with
 great Satisfaction, but must chide you for the
 over-respectful and ceremonious Stile of your
 Letter. I know not how far the Honours heaped
 on me may have induced you to think differently
 of me ; but I am not altered, I receive the Testi-
 monies of your Friendship exactly as I have done
 these sixteen Years past. We have twelve No-
 vices, and there will soon be fourteen. The

King wants to make an End of this Affair : He will present a Petition to the Bishop of *Chartres*, for obtaining his Consent to the Foundation he intends at *St. Cyr* : To this Petition he will annex the Letters Patents, exhibiting his Intentions for the Spiritual and Temporal Management. The Bishop of *Chartres* is to send his Grand Vicars along with you and Father *la Chaise*, in order to inspect the Regulations : The Temporal Matters will be ordered so as that the Translation may be made at the Feast of *St. John the Baptist*, pursuant to the King's Intentions.

LETTER CXLVI.

To the same.

Jan. 17, 1686.

I Presented your Memorial yesterday to the King, and he resolved to discourse with Father *la Chaise* about it : The Manner in which the Election of a Superior is to be made, was approved of ; the Vows were then mentioned, and Father *la Chaise* would not consent to the Bishop's not being able to dispense with them. The King gives you a Pension of two thousand Livres : I believe you did not want this Benefaction to make you satisfied with him. Examine our Constitutions with Messieurs *Racine* and *Boileau* ; but then don't spoil the Expressions

sions and the Thoughts of *Madam de Brinon*, for the Sake of polishing the Language: You know that in every thing Women write, there are always a thousand Deviations from the Rules of Grammar; but, with your Leave, there is a certain Elegancy which is rarely found in Men's Writings.

LETTER CXLVII.

To the same.

Feb. 4, 1686.

IF the Alterations intended to be made in the Constitution are considerable, and more in Number than those Gentlemen criticized upon before me, there must be a Conference with *Madam de Brinon* about them. I have been told that you had lost a Law-Suit, and that you are sadly perplexed about an Account that must be given: I am afraid this Affair will give you a great deal of Uneasiness. Can't you relinquish that Estate to your Relations, and live upon your Benefice and your Pension? If you want any other Assistance, I will procure it: You would then have nothing to do but to serve God, and you might come and live at *St. Cyr*: It would be advantageous to my Salvation to see you there.

LET.

LETTER CXLVIII.

To the same.

March 7, 1686.

THE high Favour I am in is troublesome to me, even in the Confession-Box : I imagined I should always meet with the same Behaviour from you as I experienced when I was among the Blue Nuns : You are no Stranger to my Sincerity ; I make no Compliments ; I conjure you therefore to leave off the Stile you use with me, which is not only displeasing to me, but may also do me a Prejudice. I am not a greater Lady than when I lived in *Tournelle-Street*, where you used roundly to tell me of my Faults : And tho' the Rank I now hold places all the World as at my Feet, a Man charged with the Direction of my Conscience must not stand in that Light. It is not right for you to instil Pride into me ; you, who ought to eradicate it. Where shall I find Virtue, if I find it not in you ? And to whom else can I be submissive, as nothing but Respect, Adulation and Complaisance approach me ? Speak to me, write to me, without Artifice, without Ceremony, without Insinuation, and especially, I beseech you, with less Respect. I would save my Soul ; I commit it to your Care : Look upon me as

stript

stript of all the Pomp and Grandeur that surround me: These are my real Sentiments.

LETTER CXLIX.

To Madam de St. G——.

July 2, 1686.

THE Bishop of *Chartres* stands up for absolute Vows, and is the only one of this Opinion: For my Part, I have no Will of my own in this Point, and shall always conform to the Opinion of the Majority. If I inclined to either Side of the Question, I should scruple to declare it, for fear of cramping the Freedom of Suffrages, and gaining too much Weight to a Woman's Advice. I am sure of having no other Intentions than what are good, but I am not certain that I should not take the wrong Side of the Question. The Bishop of *Chartres* has declared by a Decree in due Form, that it is the King's and his Intention that I should be perpetual Superior of this Community, both in Spirituals and Temporals: Upon which the Community have sent me a gold Cross, strewed with Flowers-de-Lys, and these Lines engraved on it:

She is our true and faithful Guide;

From her our Blessings are deriv'd.

I doubt whether we shall be able at first to take in three hundred Persons; but a few Years

of

of good Oeconomy will procure us what is now wanting. My only Uneasiness is to know what will become of this Establishment after my Decease. I am very much afraid their Fervour will relax, and that this House, which is design'd for an Azylum to the Unfortunate, may be opened to the Sollicitations of the most Powerful.

LETTER CL.

To the same.

Oct. 23, 1686.

OUR Ladies have begun their Exercises: I have seen them at their Work, at their Hours of Recreation, in their Acts of Piety, and have found every thing conducted with a great deal of Order and Simplicity. If they hold on at the same rate, not so much as two mortal Sins in a Year will be committed in that House. The elder Ladies are very discreet, and the Children very docible. The Title of Institutrix has been offered me; I did at first refuse it; but they represented to me, that it signified nothing more than that I had directed the Beginnings of this Community. Madam de Brinon perswaded me, and I let them give me what Titles they pleased. I did not want this Engagement to do Good to that Foundation; you know it is my predominant Passion; and I am so strongly at-

tached to it, that I am apprehensive of being less attached to God, tho' I do it for his Sake. I have at last obtained a Promise to have my Name omitted in the Medal: The King said, that this Event was too remarkable, for *Racine* and *Boileau* to omit the Particulars of it in the History of his Reign. My Brother tells me that you complain of his Wife: I am surprized you did not impart to me the Cause of your Complaints; you know I am not strongly prejudiced in favour of my Sister-in-Law: Time and God will mend her.

LETTER CLI.

To the same.

Versailles, Dec. 13, 1686.

THE Death of the Prince of *Condé* has much grieved and much more edified us: His Letter to the King is an admirable Piece: He therein gives Judgment on his own Conduct, and a severe Judgment it is: He also begs a Pardon for his Nephew; it is some Weeks since I spoke of it, at the Request of the Princess of *Conti*, and was pretty favourably heard. The Death of the Prince has given the finishing Stroke; and the King has been so much affected with it, that he shed Tears: *M. de Chevreuse* is prodigiously dejected: *Madam du Lude* loses a Friend; her Sorrow is not like that of other People;

People; you easily guess the Reason and the Difference. Our Sisters of *St. Cyr* are mightily pleased with the Director you have given them; and their Director is as well pleased with them. He complains of having too little Occupation; he never could have believed that a religious House was so easy to be governed. Another Man, of a bustling Temper, might not like to see his Penitents so rational. The King always takes the Air on Horseback; Madam *du Lude* and I follow him in a Chaise. *Versailles* is as quiet as if the Embassadors of *Siam* were not there: They admire every thing, but the Master still more than the House. I recommend myself to your Prayers.

LETTER CLII

To the same.

Jan. 2, 1687.

I HAVE at last snatched a Moment to write to you. The King is as well as one in his Condition can be. Our Joy encreases with our Hopes. The Physicians assure that the Danger is over. The King has given *Fagon* an hundred thousand Livres, and as much to * *Felix*.

* Surgeon to his Majesty, on whom he perform'd the Operation of the Fistula, after having practised on several Patients in the Hospitals. Besides the hundred thousand Livres, he got a Bishoprick for his Brother by this Operation.

I never beheld an Instance of greater Courage, The Calamities of his People, had they lost him, the Apprehension of the Dauphin's falling into the Hands of evil Counsellors, the Foresight of the Disgrace of his best Friends, were the only Things that made him uneasy : He trembled for France, but not a Moment for his own Life. Madam de Montespan will come back : The King has been greatly affected with her Tears. The *Vendosmes* are rendered suspicious : God knows how the Matter stands ! There may be nothing criminal in that Festivity ; but it was very imprudent and unseasonable. I am not yet at the End of my Sorrows ; and I perceive they impute to me that profound Secrecy, and that they descant upon it. You know how much I have it at Heart to put all the Royal Family on good Terms with the King ; and yet I am accused of keeping them at Variance. The Dauphin has assured me that he neither believed, nor even listened to these Reports ; but he may one Day give Ear to them. I am in a lamentable Situation ; I dare not speak of it to the King, for fear of sowing his Temper : He would not bear with these strange Suspicions ; he might, perhaps, revenge me : but I had rather pardon them. My dear little Prince is in good Health.

L E T.

LETTER CLIII.

To Madam de Montespan.

Jan. 12, 1687.

THE King has ordered me, Madam, to write to you, that you would oblige him by appearing again at Court, unless the Desire of minding your spiritual Concerns should detain you at *Fontevrault*: In this Case, he does not expect that you should alter your pious Resolutions for his Sake: But if your Absence is the Consequence of any Discontent, I can assure you, Madam, that you can do nothing better than to return speedily. The King would have permitted you to enter his Chamber, had he not feared a tender Emotion that might have been prejudicial to his Health at that Juncture. He has been very much concerned at your Grief, and has embraced our Princes with a great deal of Tendernefs. The Duke *du Maine* has taken upon him to present you my Respects; I could not put my Cause in better Hands: Believe it, Madam, that whatever affectionate Things he may tell you as from me, his Expressions will ever fall very short of what Inclination and Gratitude inspire me.

LET-

LETTER CLIV.

To Madam de S. G——.

Feb. 2, 1687.

PARIS ought to be very well satisfied with its Master: The King never was in so good Humour as since he has been an Eye-witness of the Affection of his Capital. I am much delighted to find in him such Sentiments: They may perhaps inspire him with a Design to ease his People. Father *la Chaise* has a greater Influence than ever over the King: From henceforth he is to act without the Archbishop of *Paris*; and *Madam de Lesdiguières* will no longer see the Clergy of *France* on their Knees before her. It was a great Scandal. He is to make his Report, and the King will nominate: You may well imagine that this high Favour will lay all the Nation at the Feet of the Society. I have already waited upon him in Behalf of your Nephew, and did it with a good Grace: We must indeed dissemble a little, if we would serve our Friends. *Madam de Montespan* leads an angelic Life: The Court is greatly altered since she has ceased to govern it. The Prince of *Conti* gains the Love of God and Men.

LET.

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LETTER CLV.

To the same.

Maintenon, July 28.

YOU are sensible that I am too busy to write so long a Letter as I could wish: Your Nephew has been presented to the King, who said to me, I will promote him in due Time; let him behave well. Father *la Chaise* has not yet been able to find any thing better for him. I very heartily thank you for having at last afforded me an Opportunity to serve you: Dispose of my Credit as if it were your own. The Works at *Maintenon* are in great Forwardness: The King's Presence spoils nothing there: 'Tis a fine Sight to behold a whole Army employed in embellishing a Country Seat! The two Hills will be joined by forty-seven Arches solidly built: It is, in every Body's Opinion, a Work worthy of the *Romans* and of *Louis*. All this often brings me back to reflect on the Folly of Men, in taking such Pains to adorn a Habitation, in which they are to live a few Days.

LETTER CLVI.

To the same.

Versailles, Sept. 10, 1687.

BE easy in regard to your Nephew's Concerns: I am a little better informed than they are

at

at *Paris*, and see no Appearance of War. Your Politicians build Castles in the Air; the King's Sentiments are very pacific, and he will indeed suffer the Emperor to beat the *Turks* as long as he pleases; It is true, that, if some Peoples Advice was followed, *France* would stop the Progress of the House of *Austria*; but the King is too true to his Word, to set all *Europe* in a Flame through an ill grounded Jealousy. Formerly I would not, perhaps, have answered for him; but at present God has inspired him with a Love of Peace, which encreases every Day. Pray the Almighty to pour down his Blessings on all his Undertakings. I am very glad that you like *Maintenon*: Is it not really a fine Seat? I told you long ago, that the King did nothing by Halves. The Dauphin is reconciled with the little Duke, and, contrary to my Expectations, without the King's having had any Hand in it.

LETTER CLVII.

To the same.

Versailles, March 13, 1688.

OUR News-Mongers magnify Objects as they please; it is only occasionally, and as it were provisionally, that I occupy the Queen's Apartment; and accordingly I have furnished it in a very modest Way. The King came into it yesterday,

yesterday, and looking at my large *Italian* Crucifix, said to me, "That's a very grave Piece of Furniture; I advise you to get it removed." I answered him, "What are you then afraid to behold him who is your only Hope, who will be your Refuge at the Hour of Death, and will then be put into your Hands? You ought indeed to accustom yourself to the Sight of him." The King told me with a Smile, that I had an excellent Knack at preaching; and so the Crucifix remains. The Pope's Inflexibility greatly alarms me. *Louvois* is sorely grieved to find his Credit beginning to decline: He envies me the Influence I have acquired; he imputes to me the King's Disgust; in fine, he wants to render himself necessary by a new War. Heaven has been very kind to me: Nothing is wanting to my temporal Happiness but the Certainty of Peace.

LETTER CLVIII.

To the same.

Verfailles, Sept. 5, 1688.

I Have pray'd for Peace, and God has sent us War. Let us humble ourselves under his mighty Hand, and adore his Providence. The King is not pleased with the Dauphiness: He takes it ill that she interests herself so openly for
Prince

Prince * *Clement*. The Dauphin will set out from *Versailles* towards the End of this Month with *M. de Beauwilliers*, who will not be useless to him. His Army is to invest *Philipsbourg*; *Louvois* will omit nothing, in order to engage him, by the first Successes, to continue this War. I dare not tell it to the King, who has an intire Confidence in *M. de Duras*. Methinks all these Disputes might be terminated without spilling so much Blood. The King intended to take the Field, but has promised me to defer it till next Spring: God grant that a Peace may be made before that Time. Our Intelligence from *England* is very bad: The Jesuits have managed Matters too hastily: Father *la Chaise* commends their Zeal, but not their Prudence.

LETTER CLIX.

From Madam Guion to Madam de Maintenon.

Madam,

Paris, Oct. 10, 1688.

AFTER having thanked the divine Providence for delivering me from the Prison in which my Enemies held me, it is very just that I should return Thanks to you, Madam, whom God has made use of to rescue me, as it were by a Miracle, out of the Hands of the great Men of the Earth. I have obeyed your Counsels as I

* Of *Bavaria*.

would

would have obeyed the Injunctions of God; and I hope you will not attribute this Obedience to Weakness, but look upon it as the best Testimony I could give you of my Gratitude. At first I had an Aversion to it; but the Moment I overcame it, I felt Joy and Tranquility flowing into my Soul. * *La Combe*, my Father in *Jesus Christ*, is not more culpable than myself: I am the Cause of his Misfortunes: You have only to speak, Madam, and his Fetters will drop off. In so doing you will restore to the Faithful an oppressed innocent Man, who may edify and instruct them. My God! *thy* will be done, and not *mine*! I set out to throw myself at your Feet; but a secret Voice obliged me against my Will to stop short on the Road and return hither. I shall wait for your Commands. May the Lord inspire and guide you! I shall never cease to put up that Prayer to him, nor to subscribe myself with profound Respect, &c.

LETTER CLX.

To Madam de Monchevreuil.

THERE is nothing in your Grief unworthy a Christian: So natural it is to weep for a

* *A Bernabite*, a Native of *Geneva*, and Director of *Madam Guion*: A Man disordered in his Intellects. He was confined in 1686 by the King's Order, as a Seducer, and died mad.

well

well behaved and well established * Son ! God does not forbid such Sensations. But take Care that your Grief be not too violent and make you murmur against Providence : It is vain to resist its Dispensations. I send you the Abbé : He'll tell you how much I am concerned at your Affliction : He will also tell you what little Stability there is in the Felicities of this World. You were too happy ; God designed to bring you back to himself. It is indeed a terrible Blow, but he strikes it for your Good : He knows better than we do what is for our Advantage. These are melancholy Reflections, but they are true, and suitable to a Soul great as yours. What would avail the Progress you have made in Piety, if it could not support you in this Tribulation ? 'Tis in Adversity we are to judge whether our Devotion is sincere. What is Virtue, if it be not tried ? God does not require only the Sacrifice of our vicious Inclinations ; he wants us to sacrifice likewise our Sentiments and our dearest Affections.

* *M. de Mornay*, Son of *Madam de Montchevreuil*, and Aid de Camp to the Dauphin, was killed at the Siege of *Manheim* before his Father's Face, who had followed the *Duke du Maine*.

LETTER CLXI.

To Madam de S. G——.

I BEG you would date your Letters. Madam *Mernay* makes a Collection of them : Were you to do the same with mine, you should have no more of them. In spite of the Encomiums you bestow on my Wit, I am very sensible my Letters are only good for the present Moment. I thank you for that Manuscript : I read it before I went to Bed : There is much Truth but more Falshood in it. Had I been in the Place of the Dauphiness, I should have perused it all with more Indifference. Could the King believe Things so absurd ? And such as are not absurd, he knew already, and so did the whole Nation. The Duke *de Beauvilliers* has taken the right Side of the Question ; and all that they say at *Paris* cannot make every Body at *Versailles* change their Mind. It is true that you take a better View of Things at a Distance ; but that is not the Case in this Matter. I have not a Moment at Command ; therefore I conclude ; and yet have many Things to say. If I don't see you *Saturday*, you'll reserve me that Pleasure for *Sunday* : I shall be disengaged at the usual Hours : I wish I could always be so for your Sake.

LET-

LETTER CLXII.

From the Dauphiness to Madam de Maintenon.*

* * * * *
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As for what you write concerning your Sentiments towards me, I never doubted of their being such as you make Profession of; for you have too much Sense and Probity to harbour any other. You wrong me in desiring me not to write to you, lest it should make me dull; I feel great Pleasure when I write to you, as you may be convinced by this Letter, which is longer than usual. I wait impatiently for the King's Return, and expect at the same Time the Pleasure of giving you Assurances myself of the Fullness of my Friendship. Adieu, my dear *Madam de Maintenon*.

* This Princess was grown melancholy and of difficult Access: She denied herself every Kind of Pleasure, and shut herself up in her Closet with a few Female Confidants, who imposed upon her Credulity. She died of a lingering Distemper the 20th April, 1690. She was a Lover of Learning, and had even made Verses, says *Voltaire* in his *Siecle of Louis XIV.* but, to judge from this Sketch of her Prose, what Sort of Verses could they be?

L E T T E R CLXIII.

To Madam de S. G——.

M. *De Lausun* is become more than ever the Subject of Conversation. He wants me to join with him in taking Vengeance; I have told him that I had long ago forgiven all: He is too vindictive to believe it; and yet he wishes that * *Mademoiselle* would say as much to him. He is quite obliterated in the King's Heart; and *Inquietude* now holds there but by a Thread. He takes it in great Dudgeon (*probably M. de Louvois*) that the Direction of the Affairs of *Ireland* has been taken from him. At first he imputed it to me; and then charged *Madam de Chevreuse* with it. He reckoned upon immense Perquisites. *Seignelai* expects nothing but Toils and Dangers: He will succeed if he does not behave with too much Haughtiness. The King could not have a better Servant, if he would but check his Temper a little: He himself acknowledges it, and yet does not amend. When I had a tolerable Voice, I could have sung that Song without any Concern: It tells me nothing that is new: Don't I know that I am old? If I could forget it, the Alteration in my Humour

* For an Explanation of this Passage the Reader is referred to *Voltaire's Age of Louis XIV.* Chap. 25.

would sufficiently tell it me. Pray, make Inquiry after the Author: If the King knew him, he would revenge me; and if I knew him, I would avenge myself by doing him Good. When I think of *Madam de Montespan*, I look upon all these Outrages as meer Trifles. I am mightily pleased with the *Duke du Maine*, and the King is disposed to grant him any Thing. My Girls take up a great deal of my Time, but much more agreeably than all the Intrigues of a certain Set of People, who are sometimes deceived, sometimes deceiving, and often both. I experience it more than ever, that nothing can make amends for the Loss of Freedom. You do well to cherish yours. Philosophy sets us above Grandeur; but nothing sets us above Heaviness of Spirits.

LETTER CLXIV.

To the same.

M*ADAM de Valentinois* would be the most amiable Woman in the Kingdom, were she not the greatest Coquette in it. You cannot imagine how many Vexations all her mischievous Tricks expose me to: The King did not care to speak to the * *Duchess de Bourbon*:

* One of his natural Daughters by *Madam de Montespan*.

I did it for him, and have had nothing but Insults from her. Can any thing be more grievous from Persons we love? She is lost without Resource: *Marson* is ruining himself, and does not perceive it. The King will not suffer all these Disorders; he will keep his Word. I now apprehend less the Father's Love, than I fear his Severity. Tell me what you would do, were you in my Place. I have consulted Father *Gaillard*, but declined explaining myself clearly; which may be the Reason why he did not well understand me; perhaps *he feigned* that he did not understand me. Talk to some able and pious Persons; wrap up the Case, and in God's Name extricate me from this cruel Dilemma. I offend God by my Impatience. I must once for all apply a Remedy. I fear to create myself Enemies; and I am also afraid that my Conscience may reproach me with suffering such a Scandal.

LETTER CLXV.

To the same.

Versailles, Nov. 4, 1688.

GREAT Rejoicings! *Philipsbourg* is taken. The Dauphin will from henceforth be called *Lewis the Bold*. The King's Joy is inexpressible, and the little Count laughs and cries

cries alternately. *Vauban's* Dispositions were admirable : He curbed the Fire of *M. de Duras*, and hindered the Dauphin from getting himself knockt on the Head. *M. de Louvois* would have the Army to penetrate into *Germany*, and ravage the *Palatinate* without Mercy : Nevertheless, some able Politicians pretend that the War ought to be carried on against the Emperor only, and that we ought in Prudence to spare the Empire. Whatever has a shew of Glory will be done, and afterwards they will think of what is profitable : They will act first, and then consider how they ought to have acted. My Presence cramps *Louvois*, and yet I never contradict him : The King has told him several times, that he might speak with full Freedom. Some imagine that I govern the State ; and they don't know I am persuaded that God has heaped so many Blessings on me, only that I might mind the King's Salvation. I daily beg of Heaven to enlighten and sanctify him. Join your Prayers to mine : They will prove more efficacious, because more disinterested : You are not like me, in love with earthly Things.

LETTER CLXVI.

From the Duke du Maine to Madam de Maintenon

Nov. 5, 1688.

PHilipsbourg has capitulated. M. de Stabrenberg has called for a Confessor and a Physician: I should be very sorry if he should die, for he agreesto every thing we would have: He is the best natured Man living. He told the Dauphin, that he should die with Grief for having lost a Place of such Consequence to his Master, did he not find some Comfort in surrendering it to so great a Prince. Adieu, Madam; I will do all that lies in my Power to deserve your Friendship. I forgot at setting out to ask the King, whether the Regiment of *Swiss Guards* ought not to beat the March for me: Such Beginnings may be drawn into Precedents.

LETTER CLXVII.

To Madam de S. G——.

Jan. 9, 1689.

THE King of *England* arrived the 7th Instant at *St. Germain's* with the Duke of *Berwick*: His first Conversation with the Queen was very moving: He consoled her, and cared

fed

fed the Prince of *Wales* in the most tender Manner : No Man can display more Fortitude : This Unconcern at the Loss of so much Grandeur is the Work of Grace : It is a charming Sight to behold a Royal Confessor of the Faith ! The Court of *St. Germain* will yield to none but *Versailles* in Magnificence : The King will not sheath the Sword 'till he has driven the Prince of *Orange* out of *England* : They call him a second *Cromwell* ; it is certain, that he has already seized the Crown ; the Catholics are oppressed, and the Parliament threatens to exterminate them. It always runs in my Mind, that if *Colbert* had lived, all this had not happened : The *Louvois* did not prevent the Descent of the *Dutch* ; he knew nothing of it till they had landed : All this sounds very ill. Measures will be taken to mend Matters ; but it would have been much better, had the Designs of the Prince of *Orange* been nipt in the Bud. *Noailles* and *Boufflers* will command in spight of *Louvois*, the first in *Catalonia*, the other on the *Moselle* : I rely much upon them, but still more on the Justice of our Cause.

LETTER CLXVIII.

*From the Duke du Maine to Madam
de Maintenon.*

At the Camp of Estlines, August 15, 1689.

I Confess to you, Madam, that I burn with Impatience to see whether I belie the Blood I am descended from ; and therefore I am sorry that I have been sent hither to be kept in a Whole Skin and learn to visit Camps : I cannot, without great Concern, see the Troops kept in Idleness. What I wrote to you about the Honours the *Swiss* Regiment of Guards owe me, is of Consequence : I have done no more methinks, than set forth my Reasons, and submitted to the King's Will : I know not whether my Vivacity made me say more than I intended. I am very far from being of Madam de Montespan's Opinion ; for though I do no great Matters here, I yet do more than at Court, where I can only limp before People who are in Pain to see me ; whereas here I learn my Trade.

LET-

LETTER CLXIX.

From the same to the same.

Sept. 29, 1689.

Madam

I WRITE but a Line to the King, because I think it better to make short Letters than dull ones: If he would have me write oftener to him, let him cut out more Work for me. Paint me to him with a grateful Sense of all his Favours; use the strongest Terms, and, with all your Wit, be fearful of not saying enough; give full Scope to your Imagination; make me say whatever you think fit: Be my Proxy, that whilst I only desire to sacrifice myself here for the King's Service, I may at the same time be at *Versailles* to take Care of my Interests. Labour for your dear Child, if you think him worthy to be owned as such.

LETTER CLXX.

From the same to the same.

Nov. 25, 1689.

IN so many Years as you have been at Court, it is surprizing, Madam, that you have not yet learned to lay the Blame on the Absent: I think I cannot bestow a greater Encomium on you. I have already experienced the Manner in
which

which you conceal bad Things, and publifh what is good : But as we fhould conclude with telling our Sins to the Confefſor, I will own to you the Occaſion of my former Debts, with all the Contrition of a good Penitent : The Terror of your Remonſtrances, which I dread more than thoſe of Madam de Montefpan, becauſe they are always ſupported by Reaſon, has hitherto prevented my acknowledging that I loſt my Money at play. Put not a bad Conſtruction on my exceſſive Fear, ſince what renders it ſo great, is the Apprehenſion of making you uneaſy, and that I cannot call it by a more proper Name than *filial* Fear.

LETTER CLXXI.

From the Queen of England to the ſame.

St. Germain, Dec. 1, 1689.

SINCE you treat me with Ceremony, in making Excuses for not having fully answered my Letter, it is juſt, Madam, that I ſhould make you as many, and rather more. I conjure you not to forget to give me an Account of your Health by my Courier, without taking the Trouble to write to me ; for I am more afraid of your Trouble, than wiſhing for my own Gratification. You know my Heart ; it will ever be the ſame ; my Friendſhip for you can neither
decrease

decrease nor increase. I pray to God, for your Sake, that he would make you a great Saint; and for my own Sake, that it may not happen so soon.

LETTER CLXXII.

From the Prince of Condé to the same.

YOU are so good-natured, Madam, and you take so much Delight in doing Good, that I dare beg the Favour of you to tell the King how much I am affected with all his Kindnesses. I cannot find Terms to express all my Gratitude. Display my Sentiments to his Majesty; I implore, Madam, the Assistance of your Genius. As you will see me no where but at Marli, I dare not in any other Place appear at your Gate.

LETTER CLXXIII.

From the King to the same.

IF you will take an Airing with me at Four o'Clock, you may come to the Apollo, where I shall meet you with a Chaise: Let me know your Pleasure in Answer to this Billet, that I may conform to it.

LETTER

LETTER CLXXIV.

From the same to the same.

ADVICES from *Flanders* are very favourable :
 We may go to *St. Cyr* to return God
 Thanks for the same, if you approve of it. Tell
Madam de Montespan that the King of *England*
 is highly pleased with *M. de Lausun*. The Dau-
 phin writes to me, that he pines away thro' Im-
 patience and Heaviness : He complains a little
 of the flegmatic Temper of *M. de Lorges* ; he
 would have more Fire and less Prudence : But
 young Men must not be left to themselves.

LETTER CLXXV.

From the Elector of Cologne to the same.

I HOPE, Madam, you will be my Protectrix,
 that I may be able to clear myself with the
 King, and wipe off the ill Impressions that have
 been given him of my Conduct : I dare make
 you this most humble Request, and I remain
 with equal Confidence and respectful Veneration,
 your most submissive Servant and Friend.

LETTER CLXXVI.

*From the Abbé Gobelin.**Versailles, 1690.*

I AM very well pleased with the Behaviour of
 our Sisters of *St. Cyr* : But the Representa-
 tions.

tions of the Play of *Esther* hinder me from visiting them so often as I would : I can no longer bear the Fatigue of it, and am resolved, without saying it openly, that it shall no more be acted for the Public. I will give out, that our Actresses are sick ; and they shall for the future act only for the King, when he comes. I beseech you not to stand in awe of me, not to seek to please me, nor give into my Sentiments thro' Complaisance, but to consult candidly with Men of Knowledge and Integrity, whether it is not a Maxim too severe and dangerous for Youth, that they must never take any Pleasure : For my Part, I think we should make them hope for Pleasure, promise them a great deal of it, give them but a little, and by all Means persuade them that there are innocent Amusements.

LETTER CLXXVII.

From the King to Madam de Maintenon.

I SHALL go to *Complin* at *St. Cyr*, if you think fit : We shall return from thence leisurely, to take the Air. You may engage the Princess of *Conti* to be of the Party : However, let her not come, nor you neither, if it be inconvenient. Be pleased to send me an Answer in your own Hand, or by *Madam de Mornay*.

LETTER

L E T T E R CLXXVIII.

To Madam de S. G——.

Versailles, April 15, 1691.

GOD gives a Blessing to the King's Arms; Mons is taken, Nice has surrender'd; the King will soon be here: *Vauban* and *Boufflers* are Partners in his Triumphs: They made admirable Dispositions; nay, they did more; they hindered the Mousquetaires from rushing upon certain Death. *Courtenay* wished to die under the King's Eye; he is dead. Console yourself, my dearest, for the Loss of *M. de Villermont*: The King has very much regretted him, and Madam *de Villermont* will find that this Regret is not barren. From *Italy* they write me Wonders of *L——*; he is very much in favour with *M. de Catinat*; write to him, that you answer for him to me: I greatly apprehend that he has taken a Flight which he will not be able to sustain, and that the King may have Occasion to reproach me with having supported a Gamester, and presented him as a Man of Merit, because he is a Relation of mine. — Adieu, my dearest. I have just now received another Visit from the *Abbé de Fenelon*: He is a Man of fine Sense, and I am told he is still more remarkable for his Piety; which I am much delighted with.

L E T T E R

LETTER CLXXIX.*

To Madam de Bainon.†

Chantilly, March 28, 1692.

YOU are in the right to dispose every thing for our Sister ** *Lallie's* taking the Habit; but how can you be uncertain of the Day? Is not it fixed with the Person that performs the Ceremony? For my Part, I shall be equally ready *Thursday* or *Friday*. M. *Racine*, who has a Mind to weep, would rather have it on *Friday*, which, however, need not oblige you to alter your Measures: Only give me Notice as soon as possible. I don't write to Madam de la *Maison-fort*: What could I write to her that she does not know better than myself? Would to God that she knew nothing but Jesus Christ crucified, that she could forget all other Things, and give herself up to God and to us with that sincere and tender Heart she once had, and even with all her former Imperfections, which I liked much better than those she has acquired by De-

* This Letter has already appeared in the Supplement to the Letters of *John Racine*, published by the Inheritor of his Name and Talents.

† She was the first Superior of the House of *St. Cyr*.

** She had acted the Part of *Abasuerus* in *Esther*.

votion!

votion ! The good Testimonies you give me of the Community greatly rejoice me: Exult at being beloved and respected for God's Sake; and renounce that Self-love which is apt to make those Sentiments center in ourselves. When I see our dear Girls acting in the Spirit of Faith, I have great Hopes that they will establish themselves on a solid Foundation. May God bless them more and more, that they may by their Care and Watchfulness increase his Kingdom. I shall not send you this Day your Constitutions: Mess. Racine and Despreaux are reading them, admiring them, and correcting some Faults in the Style. You receive my Counsels as if they came from an Angel. God grant I may give them to you as perfectly as you receive them !

LETTER CLXXX.

From M. de Fiesque to Madam de Maintenon.

June 14.

I HAVE the Honour, Madam, to write to you in haste, to beseech you to conjure the King to behave here as a General, and not as a Soldier. Yesterday, had it not been for a Gabbion, a Bullet would have bereft us of him. The Shot rebounded on the Count *de Toulouze*, who came off with a Bruise that need not alarm Madam *de Montespan*: The King asked him

whether

whether he was wounded ; and the young Prince answered, smiling, I think a Ball has grazed upon me. This was answering *Bourbon-like*. I should never have done, Madam, were I to set down the Names of all that were wounded or killed near or by the King's Side. In God's Name, Madam, let him leave us the Danger, and content himself with the Glory.

LETTER CLXXXI.

From the Abbé Gobelin to the same.

Paris, March 18, 1692.

Madam

THERE never was any Sorrow more lawful than your's : The Eyes of all *Paris* are upon you, and are the more edified, as they are persuaded that it depended entirely on you to be exempt from it ; so that it is not looked upon as the Effect of an effeminate and purely natural Tendernefs, but as the Result of a Soul liberally endowed with Courage and Reason. Would to God that I were worthy of mingling my Tears with those that trickle down your Cheecks, and joining my poor Prayers to the Vows you make at the Feet of the Altars for the Conseruation of the first and greatest King on Earth ! But how wonderful art thou, O God, in the Manner in which it pleaseth thee to make thine

Elect

Elect suffer! Thou dost not afflict them like other Men, by the Loss of Goods, nor by the Strokes of Calumny: Thou dost sanctify them by their own Ways, and makest their Joy and Love the Cause of their Desolation and Afflictions: Which makes me tell you, Madam, that there is nothing in the Scripture that suits your Case better than these Words of Job, *How extraordinary and wonderful, O Lord, is the Manner in which thou tormentest me!* In Effect, what is this Absence which you bemoan, but the most glorious Expedition that any Monarch ever undertook, which terrifies all *Europe*, and not only makes the Prince of *Orange*, the Marquess of *Brandenburgh*, the Duke of *Bavaria* turn pale, but even the King of *Spain* and the Emperor. Did the Sun ever behold any thing so daring as this Siege, whilst potent Enemies conspire through mean Jealousy against a Domination which by a truly Christian Moderation tends only to their Peace and Repose? In fine, to sum up all, what is this Expedition, but a friendly Plank offered to the *Flemmings*, to save them from the Storm in which they are ready to perish? And how excessive would be our Joy to see *Louis the Great*, not only King of *France* and *Navarre*, but also Duke of *Brabant* and Earl of *Flanders*? Let this Thought then,

then, which is no poetical Flight, but the Opinion of the most sensible Politicians, alleviate your just Grief ! Let it animate your Piety, and dispel the Fears you may have for the sacred Person of a Prince, who does not carry with him *Cæsar* and his Fortune, but the Justice of his Arms and the powerful Interests of the Catholic Religion. Pray and fast, Madam, give Alms, and go to the Communion : 'Tis thus that the *Clotilda's*, the *Batilda's* the *Blanche's* of *Castile*, behaved on similar Occasions ; and 'tis all that the Station, in which Providence has placed you, requires from you.

LETTER CLXXXII.

To Mr. d'Aubigné.

March 15, 1693.

IT is with great Concern I have heard of your Illness ; for even your slightest Ailments make me tremble, when I think of the State of your Soul : Is it possible that your Heart is ill disposed only towards God, to whom you are indebted for so many good Qualities, which will be useless to you, if you don't employ them for his Sake ? You are good-natured, humane, generous, honest, affable, liberal to the Poor, and all this without Devotion. Visit Mess. *Thiberge* and *Brisacier*, or some other pious Man :

Man : I mention these to you, because I esteem them : Were they satisfied with your Conduct, my Mind would be at Rest. Shall I see all the World but you converted ? Make serious Reflections on so important a Point, and pardon my Importunities in Consideration of my Friendship : If it be true, as some would persuade me, that the President *Bignon* does yet remember our former Acquaintance, I desire you would assure him, that I have retained for him all the Esteem he deserves, and a grateful Sense of the Kindness he formerly had for me. Recommend to him the Concern of the Duke *de Richelieu* : 'Tis demanding of him Justice ; in vain would it be to ask him for any thing else. Adieu ; you don't answer the Letters I send you : Few treat me in the same Manner : It must be forgiven you, on Account of its being so rare a Case.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

*From Cardinal * Ottoboni to Madam de Maintenon.*

Most illustrious and most excellent Lady,

THE Merit equal to the Quality which your Lord acknowledges in your Excellency, obliges him on this Occasion to give you

* This Cardinal was afterwards Pope *Alexander VIII.* He got a Cardinal's Hat without being at any

a Testimony of his Affection : Therefore his Holiness, in sending Monsignor *Trevisani* to the Court of *France*, charges him to wait upon your Excellency in his Name, and to deliver you a Brief from him. Monsignor *Trevisani* will also acquaint your Excellency with my particular Attachment to you. I hope you will let me know how far you are persuaded of it, by the Commands with which you will honour me. I kiss the Hands of your Excellency, whose most humble and most obedient Servant I am.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

From the Dauphin to the same.

I Entreat you to believe me the best of your Friends : Your Letter has given me so much Pleasure, in acquainting me with the Friendship the King has for me, and that he is satisfied with my Behaviour, that I cannot forbear writing you a Letter of Thanks for the Information. I assure you that I account you the best Friend I

any Expende for it: He persuaded the famous *Donna Olympia*, the Sovereign Dispenser of Favours, that he would give her a magnificent Beaufet of Plate and a very fine Pearl Necklace, which he shewed her : A Fortnight after there was a Promotion of Cardinals, in which *Ottoboni* was included ; upon which he immediately returned the Necklace and the Plate to the Tradesman that had lent them to him.

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can have; and you will oblige me, in case I do any thing displeasing to the King, to send me Notice of it frankly, that I may endeavour to do better.

LETTER CLXXXV.

*From the Abbé * de Fenelon to the same.*

ZEAL for the King's Salvation must not carry you beyond the Bounds which Providence seems to have marked out for you: The Moments, which God alone can know, must be watched: The right Way to prepare the King for the Reception of God's Grace, is not to tire him with Exhortations, but to edify him, to steal insensibly into his Heart by a mild and patient Demeanor. Your Application to touch his Heart, to open his Eyes, to preserve him from certain Snares, to give him Counsels of Peace and Moderation, to exite him to ease his People, and love the Church, and your Zeal to provide it with good Pastors, requires a great deal of Circumspection and much Prudence. You are the Centinel of God in the midst of *Israel*. Love the King; be obedient to him, as *Sarah* was to *Abraham*. Respect him from the

* The Abbé *de Fenelon* was the Director of *Madam de Maintenon*, and succeeded the Abbé *Gobelin*, as the Bishop of *Chartres* succeeded *M. de Fenelon*.

Bottom

Bottom of your Heart ; look upon him as your Lord in the Order of God. It is true, Madam, that your Station is a Riddle ; but 'tis God has made it so: You did not wish for it so; you did not chuse it, nor even imagine it: 'Tis God's Work. He conceals his Secrets from you, and also hides some from the Public, which would surprize the World, if you revealed them as you do to me. 'Tis the Mystery of God: It was his Will that you should rise to Grandeur, in order to sanctify those that are born in Grandeur. You hold the Place of a Queen, and yet have no more Liberty nor Authority than the Wife of Tradesman.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

To Madam de S. G——.

Versailles, April 14, 1694.

M. *de Noailles* has promised me a glorious Campaign: He writes to me, that he will overcome the King's Enemies and his own. As he has always kept his Word with me, I depend much upon this double Victory. *M. de Luxembourg* knows not what it is to fly; he has got a Habit of winning Battles, and takes Towns as it were by way of Amusement. *Joyeuse* and *de Lorges* are brave, and have Talents too, as some say. I think the King has no

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great Esteem for the Prince of *Baden*, and his Majesty is a good Judge : So that I am more tranquil than you imagine. It is true that I ardently wish for Peace ; but they little know me, who imagine I prefer it to the King's Glory. It is not that I hinder him from going to *Flanders* : I would with Pleasure follow him thither. A Reflection of *Madam du Lude*, which I did not give into, has broke off that Design ; and I own to you that I am not sorry for it. What Glory could he acquire in beating the Prince of *Orange*, who is so accustomed to Defeats ?

LETTER CLXXXVII.

To the same.

May 12.

I HAVE had two Months in my Hands a Copy of an *Exposition on Solomon's Song* : Some Passages in it are obscure, some edifying, and there are others which I can by no Means approve of. The Abbé de *Fenelon* has told me, that the *short Method* contained the Mysteries of the sublimest Devotion, setting aside a few trifling Expressions that are to be found in the Writings of the mystical Divines. I read a Scrap of it to the King, who told me it was all an idle Dream. He has not yet made a sufficient Progress in Piety to relish this Perfection. I have earnestly desired
Madam

Madam de Brinon not to put these Books into the Hands of our Sisters. Such spiritual Food is too strong for them : They must have a Diet suitable to their Years. Nevertheless, *Madam Guinon* edifies them. I have entreated her to leave off visiting them, but I could not refuse to let them read the Letters of a Woman of such Piety and good Morals. The Archbishop of *Paris* seems mightily exasperated against her ; yet he owns, that her Errors are more dangerous in their Consequences than in the Principles, and that there is more to be feared than censured in them. Let us pray to God to teach his Ways to those whom he has charged to guide us to him.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

From Madam Guinon to Madam de Maintenon.

Paris, June 7, 1694.

Madam,

PERMIT me to throw myself at your Feet, and commit my Salvation and my Honour to your Care. For these eighteen Years past the Love of God has been my constant Study and Occupation. I frequent none but pious People : I speak, I write to none but my Friends, whose Zeal and Virtue the whole World is acquainted with : I have no Connections with any Persons

suspicious to the Church or to the State. Nevertheless, I am overwhelmed with Calumnies from all Quarters; they vent their Spleen and Rage against me, they blacken my Morals, and throw Suspicions on my Conduct both past and present: They say I am a Rebel to the Church, that I want to set up a Religion of my own broaching, that I think myself more enlightened than the *Sorbonne*; I, who know nothing but Jesus Christ crucified. *M. Bossuet* knows how obedient I am to my Directors: He has told me I am harmless as a Dove, and offered me a Certificate of my being at present a good Catholic. He has interdicted me the Sacraments; I have abstained these three Months from the Bread of Heaven, and though my Soul is racked with Affliction, I murmur not against that Decision. My Life has hitherto been irreproachable, and yet I am accused of scandalous Vices. I beseech you, Madam, by that pure Love which God shewed to Men in dying for them, I beseech you to desire the King to appoint Commissaries to make an Inquiry extraordinary into my Life and Manners; that being purged and cleared of the atrocious Crimes laid to my Charge, the Examination of my Doctrine may afterwards be taken in Hand with less Partiality. Will you not screen me from

from the Injustice of Mankind, you, Madam, who know the Depth of their Malice?

LETTER CLXXXIX.

From the same to the same.

Madam,

WHILST I was only accused of praying, and teaching others how to pray, I was contented to remain in Obscurity. I apprehended, that as I neither spoke nor wrote to any body, I should give Satisfaction to all the World, appease my Enemies, moderate the Zeal of certain Persons of Probity, whose Uneasiness proceeded only from the Bias which Calumny had made them take; But now I hear that I am accused of Things in which Honour is concerned, and that they talk of Crimes. I think my Duty to the Church, to my Family, and to myself, calls upon me to bring the Truth to light. I therefore demand of you, Madam, a Piece of Justice which has never been refused to any body, even in the most barbarous Nations, nor to the greatest Criminals; and that is to bring me to a Trial, to get Commissioners appointed, half of the Laity and half of the Clergy, all of known Probity, and free from Prejudice; for Probity alone is not sufficient in an Affair concerning which Abundance of People have been

prejudiced by Calumny. If you obtain me this Favour, and I conjure you, Madam, by the Wounds of Jesus Christ, to obtain it, I will repair to any Prison that you or the King may please to appoint, and will take with me only a Girl that has attended me these fourteen Years. If God makes the Truth manifest, you may see that I am not altogether unworthy of the Kindness with which you formerly honoured me: And if it should be God's Will to suffer me to be crushed by the Efforts of Calumny, I shall adore his Justice, and very cordially submit to it, begging of him the Punishment which those Crimes deserve.

LETTER CXC.

From Madam de Maintenon to the Duke de Chevreuse.

YOU may tell Madam Guion that I have again spoke to the King, and that he greatly approved of a new Examination of her Writings: For this Purpose Persons of great Virtue and Learning will be employed; and of this you may assure her. I very sincerely wish that her Tenets may not be found erroneous.

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LETTER CXCI.

To the Duke de Beauvilliers.

I NEVER gave any Credit to the Reports spread about the Morals of *Madam Guion*; I think them very good and very pure; but her Doctrine is bad, at least in the Consequences that may be drawn from it. In justifying her Morals, it is to be feared her Opinions may be propagated, and that such Persons as are already seduced, may think them thereby authorized. It is better once for all to canvass thoroughly what relates to her Doctrine; after which all the rest will fall of itself. I will strenuously labour to compass this.

LETTER CXCH.

To Madam de S. G——.

ANOTHER Letter from *Madam Guion*! That Woman is very troublesome. It is true she is unfortunate. She now desires me to get the Bishop of *Chalons* and the Rector of *St. Sulpitius* joined in Commission with the Bishop of *Meaux*, in order to judge definitively the Points on which her Faith is suspected. She promises me a blind Obedience. I know not whether the King may be willing to give this farther Mortification to the Archbishop of *Paris*;

for, in short, as this Heresy has been broached in his Diocese, it belongs to him first to pass Sentence on it; and you may depend upon it, he will stickle for his Prerogatives. *Fenelon* is too pious not to believe that a Man may love God purely for his Sake, and has too much Sense to think that a Man immersed in the most shameful Vices can love him: He has protested to me, that he intermeddles in this Affair with no other View, than that the Sentiments of truly devout Souls may not be condemned through Inattention. He is no Advocate for *Madam Guion*, though he is her Friend: He is the Defender of Piety and Christian Perfection. I rely on his Word, because I have met with few Men so sincere.

LETTER CXCH.

From Cardinal Gualterio to Madam de Maintenon.

July 14, 1695.

WERE I capable of obeying you, Madam, I should look upon your Commands as the most glorious Fortune that could happen to me. I beg you would be pleased to honour me with your Orders at all Times, in all Places, and upon all Occasions, without any Reserve, and with all the absolute Authority which you ought to be persuaded you have over me.

LET-

LETTER CXCIV.

To Madam de S. G——.

Versailles, March 12, 1696.

EVERY body is sick ; the King has the Tertain Ague, Father *la Chaise* a violent Cold, the Duke of *Burgundy* the Megrim, and Madam *du Lude* and I are in the Vapours : In fine, 'tis a melancholy Sight. Madam *Mornay* alone heroically bears up against the Change of the Season. We are very melancholy since the Absence of Mademoiselle *d'Aumale* : I greatly long to see that Retreat at *St. Cyr* finished. We are promised Peace before the End of this Year. The King will labour at it, by continuing to beat the Allies ; especially by drawing off the Duke of *Savoy* from the Confederacy. Madam *de Montespan* is parting with all her Jewels ; she herself has been surprized at the Number and the Value of them. My Girls are no Resource to me against Melancholy. From Morning till Night I am taken up with deciding their Differences and preventing Discord : I had rather have an Empire to govern : I have resolved to send back little *de Chaumont* to her Parents in as polite a Manner is possible : If you don't approve of it, tell me your Mind ingenuously ; but I think it must be done for the Sake of Good Or-

der. I am afraid of taking up Things too sharply, and I am almost as much apprehensive of being taxed with relenting unseasonably. I am old; I may be prejudiced; and at my Age it is but too common to behave like one of the last Century. I have raised myself above the Tattle of this Place; but I have not the same Fortitude in regard to the Judgments passed on my Actions where you live.

LETTER CXCIV.

From Cardinal Janson to Madam de Maintenon.

Rome, May 15, 1696.

I HAVE received, Madam, with due Respect, the Letter which you have done me the Honour to write to me, along with that for the Pope, which I delivered to him, and with which he was a good deal affected: He has expressed to me an infinite Esteem for your Person and your Virtue. I asked him Indulgences for the Ladies of St. Cyr, after I had given him a particular Account of all the Rules and Practices of that House, which have edified him. He has ordered Cardinal *Albano*, Secretary of the Briefs, to get Indulgences dispatched in the most ample Forms, as well for the Nuns as for the young Ladies educated there, and even for those who shall visit their Church once in a Year.

L E T.

LETTER CXCVI.

*To Madam de S. G.**Maintenon, August 24, 1696.*

I AM not surprized at the different Opinions concerning the Pastoral Instruction of the Archbishop of *Paris*. This first Step of his was difficult, and all impartial Persons, that have read it, agree that he has acquitted himself of it with a great deal of Prudence. Certainly the King will be satisfied with it. The Jesuits will not forgive his raising himself to the See of *Paris* without their Participation: If they vex me, I will entreat the Pope to make him a Cardinal. The first Church of the Kingdom wanted a Prelate of unspotted Morals, of a moderate, gentle and simple Character, of a rational and solid Piety: The King thought he perceived all these Qualities in *M. de Nogailles*: He consulted with himself, he advised with Men of Probity, he consulted God; and nothing is more true, than that had he known an honest Man in *France*, he would have made him Pastor of his Capital. Would to God that these Quarrels about Religion were as near their Conclusion as the War that divides the Princes of *Europe*! Peace is made with the Duke of *Savoy*; and the King is disposed to give Peace to the rest of *Europe*. The Princess *Adelaide* is to be the Knot of this

this Treaty. The Emperor wanted her for the King of the *Romans*; but the Duke of *Burgundy* has carried her against his Rival. This Princess is very amiable, but she is very young: We shall be obliged to educate her, which is more plague and trouble for us. I envy your Solitude and your Tranquility, and am no longer surprized that Queen *Christina* descended from the Throne, that she might live with more Freedom.

LETTER CXCVII.

To the Duchess of Savoy.

THIS is such a Letter as little suits the Respect I owe your Royal Highness; but I believe you will pardon it on Account of our excessive Joy for the Treasure we receive. She need not open her Mouth to shew us her Wit; her Way of listening, and all the Emotions of her Countenance, sufficiently shew that nothing escapes her Notice. Your Royal Highness will scarcely believe, though we can aver it to you, how much the King is delighted with her: He told me yesterday, that he constrained himself, lest his Joy should appear excessive. The Princess is polite to a Degree that does not let her say any thing disagreeable: Yesterday I wanted to decline her Caresses, and put her off by telling her I was too old; but she answered me,

oh!

oh! not so old! When the King left the Room, she ran to embrace me: She then made me sit down, after observing my Difficulty in standing, and placing herself with a flattering Air almost on my Knees, she said to me, 'Mamma has charged me to give you a thousand Demonstrations of her Friendship, and to beg your Friendship for myself: Pray, instruct me well in every Thing whereby I may please the King.' These are her Words, Madam; but the gay, the sweet, the graceful Air with which they were uttered, is not to be expressed in a Letter.

LETTER CXCVIII.

To Madam de F——.

ALL Things are carried to deplorable Extremities: The King is much concerned at what he knows, but he knows not the Whole. Those who impute all these Misfortunes to me, greatly wrong me: Were it true that I meddled in every thing, they ought surely sometimes to ascribe good Counsels to me. I have been in high Favour these ten Years; I have not yet done Harm to any one; I have made a great Number of Malecontents; I never committed either Wickedness or Injustice. The King has often reflected on me for my Moderation; which is much better than upbraiding me for my Impertunity. With that Insensibility which I thought

thought I had for the Things of this World, and especially for the Reflections of Libertines; I now find I have made no greater Progress than when I began to restrain and overcome my Humours and Passions. L—— gives me a vast deal of Vexation; he sets me at Defiance, leans upon the Duke *de Vendome*, and will not forgive me for having discovered that he deceived me.

LETTER CXCIX.

To the same.

I BEG you would charge M. *Lallemant* to examine carefully M. * *de Tillemont*'s Papers: That History must be among them. The Copy which I have in my Hands comes from him; I miss three Quires of it; I think it is the eighth and the two last. Don't tell M. *Lallemant* that this Search concerns me: It might make him suspect something. Every thing is taken for Party Spirit by certain Folks. I have seen the Abbé de * *Choisy*, and found him so rational, that when I compare him with what he was formerly, I feel a Pleasure in seeing him. But,

* *Sebastian-le Nain de Tillemont*, born at *Paris* in 1637, the Disciple of *Nicole*, Author of an Ecclesiastical History; died in 1698.

* *Francis de Choisy*, born at *Rouen* in 1644; sent with a publick Character to *Siam*; Author of divers Works, the best of which is his *Memoirs*. He died in 1719.

dear

dear Child, Grace performs many other wonders.

LETTER CC.

To the same.

I KNOW every thing that is father'd on the Duke du Maine. They cannot succeed in their Design to set us at Variance: He offered to give me the clearest Proofs, and I have declined them. If he is guilty, it is in such a trifle, that I should be to blame to take Offence at it. 'Tis a Sentiment of filial Love, and how can I condemn it, I that have done all that I could to make him love his Mother more than me, without having been able to compass it? I doubt not but Madam de Montespan would have been extremely glad of a signal Rupture. I will never give her that Pleasure.

LETTER CCI.

To the same.

OUR Advices from Poland are so agreeable, that I could not refuse the Princess of Conti what she has so long wished for. The Abbé * de Polignac gives to that whole Family an Air * Melchior de Polignac, Cardinal, born at Velay in 1662; a Pattern for Negotiators: a good Latin Poet; died in 1741.

of Grandeur which is not displeasing. The Prince will set out To-morrow; 'tis a little late, but the Misfortune is irreparable. Madam de Simiane follows her Caprices, and you know what she is. I have left her to take her own Course. I have always repented my endeavouring to direct Women: Men are more tractable and docible.

LETTER CCII.

To the same.

MY Wishes and Prayers are at last heard; nay, I never had any Pleasure equal to that which I now feel. I congratulate you on your Triumph: Your Joy is mine; I feel it entirely. This Competitorship alarm'd me: All Things changed in a Moment. Let us ascribe the Whole to him who dispenses Prosperity and Adversity as he pleases. This is the Burden of my Song; and when you come to my Years, you will find how pleasant it is to refer to Providence all the Glory of fortunate Events.

L E T -

LETTER CCIII.

From the Duke de Vendome to Madam de Maintenon.*

Madam,

NEXT to God I am indebted to you for all the Favours I receive from the King: Suffer me to express my Gratitude for them. The Idleness, out of which you have drawn me, did not well suit the Passion I have had from my Youth up for his Majesty's Service. If I have any Success and reap any Glory, I shall be your Debtor on these Scores, and whether fortunate or unfortunate, I shall ever be, &c.

LETTER CCIV.

To Madam de S. G——.

Versailles, May 25, 1697.

THE taking of *Barcelona, Ath* and *Carthage*, gives the King an Opportunity to convince the Allies of his sincere Inclination to Peace: He may facilitate the Conclusion of it, by not insisting on the Conditions which his Victories and Conquests seem to authorize, without derogating from his Glory: He may even wait the Term which he has fixed for their Ac-

* *Louis Joseph, Duke of Vendome, General of the Gallies of France in 1694, died in 1712.*

ceptance of those Conditions. All the Restitutions offered by the King have occasioned warm Debates here : They are tired of the War, and yet think it a little shameful to restore what has cost so much Toil and Blood. For my Part, I think it is glorious to restore what has been taken, provided we be not constrained to do it by a superior Force : Such a Step cannot but be looked upon as an Effect of the King's Generosity.

LETTER CCV.

To the same.

* *MADAME* is very well satisfied : The King has promised her to oblige the Elector Palatine to give her every Year three hundred thousand Livres, until her Affair be decided by Arbitrators. We shall not abandon Cardinal *Furstenberg*, though his Conduct has given but little Satisfaction : He has wrote me very pressing Letters, and they have made an Impression on the King. In fine, we begin to breathe, and from henceforth we shall have nothing to mind but our Salvation. I daily thank God for the pacific Sentiments with which he has inspired the King : 'Tis a great Blessing to him and to his People : You know how much

* The Duchess Dowager of *Orleans*.

he

he was averſe to it formerly. Devotion makes the Heart relent at the Miſeries of Mankind, and gives the Mind clear Ideas of true Glory.

LETTER CCVI.

To the ſame.

Versailles, Dec. 10.

THEY are under a Miſtake : A Taſte for Pleaſures is extinguished in the King's Heart : Age and Devotion have taught him to make ſerious Reflections on the Vanity and Emptineſs of every thing he was formerly fond of ; and he daily makes ſome Progreſs in the Ways of God : It is not without Reluctance that he aſſiſts at the Theatres and Feſtivities, and he bemoans with me the Neceſſity which his Dignity lays him under to partake of Diverſions for which he has no longer any Reliſh. The Princeſs of *Savoy* grows every Day more charming : The Duke of *Burgundy* doats upon her. It has been ordered that he ſhall viſit her only on the Footing of a Miſtreſs : She ſhed Tears at the News, and ſaid, what ! am I not his Wife ? She afterwards laughed at it, and promiſed me to be always cruel to him, till the King ſhould command her to uſe him otherwiſe. This Child makes us ſpend many an Hour pleaſantly : The Duchefs of *Savoy* has well tutor'd her ; the King

has

has no Resolution to deny her any thing; the Ladies that attend her are loaded with Presents. There is nothing but Rejoicings to be seen here: As soon as the Festivities are over we shall be more tranquil, but not less gay. My Letters also shall be longer; but my Affection for you cannot encrease.

LETTER CCVII.

From Cardinal Aquaviva to Madam de Maintenon.

MOST illustrious and most excellent Lady, how earnest soever my Desire has always been to let your Excellency know with what Respect I am devoted to you, I never dared to take that Liberty. The Dignity of Cardinal, with which the Holy Father has lately honoured me, makes me bolder, because it may perhaps favour me with the Opportunity, which I have so long wished for, to be of Service to your Excellency, whenever you may honour me with your Commands. The Princess *des Ursins*, who has so long been acquainted with the Inclinations of my Heart, will be a good Guarantee for my Attachment to your Excellency, as she so well knows my Attachment to my Master the Catholic King, and to his most Christian Majesty. I am with the most profound Respect, &c.

L E T -

LETTER CCVIII.

*From the Duchess of Burgundy to the same.**Thursday, 1698.*

I AM vexed beyond Measure, my dear Aunt, that you should be angry with me : I assure you that I don't so much deserve it, and that from Morning till Night my whole Study is how to please you, and to abstain from Follies and Nonsense, in order to render myself worthy of your Friendship. I plainly perceive it is out of Tenderneſs for me that you are ſo ſevere about every thing that concerns me. I aſſure you, in all the Stories that have been told you of me, there are many Things which are not true. But I too well ſee, you begin to diſlike me, and that in a little Time your Love for me will be quite loſt. You would be in the Right to love me no longer, were it true that I put on a Diſguiſe with you, and did not tell you the Truth, as you begin to ſuſpect. Behold the Conſequence of this : If you think me a Liar, it is impoſſible for you not to deſpiſe me ; and if you look upon me with Contempt, the King will do the ſame ; and if the King deſpiſes me, my Caſe will be deſperate. Yes ; I am already in Deſpair, when I think that I am going to forfeit your Friendſhip ;
and

and 'tis not so much through my Fault, as by false Reports; I am ready to undertake whatever you can command, in order to avert this.

LETTER CCIX.

From the same to the same.

I Beseech you, dear Mamma, not to give Credit to every thing that may be said against me: They will report to you many Stories that are false: I'll now tell you the Truth. The Duke of *Burgundy* came into my Closet this Morning at eleven o'Clock; it was not from me that he had Notice I should be alone. I was looking after my Pidgeons; he sat down, told me that I was brisk and lively, and all on a sudden flew at me, like a Bird of Prey, to play the Fool with me. I repulsed him, and got loose from his Arms: He was ugly enough to frighten one: For that Time he only gave me a Kiss; I smartly reprimanded him, and said, that I would let my dear Aunt know it. He answered me, he had it from good Hands that this was the Way of playing with one's Mistress. I told him that I would no longer be his Mistress; he replied, Be my Wife then, and fell upon me again. Madam *Mornay* came in at that very Instant: She will affect to tell you a great deal of Harm of me; but for my Part, I have told you the Truth.

LETTER CCX.

To Madam de S. G.—

Versailles, March 4, 1698.

I AM settling my Niece; the Business is done; so be quick with your Compliment on this Occasion. It costs my Brother an hundred thousand Livres; I give six hundred thousand, and the King a Million; you see the Gradation is pretty well observed. M. de Noailles gives his Son twenty thousand Livres a Year, and secures to him double that Income after his Death. The King, who does nothing by Halves, gives to M. d'Ayen the Survivorship in the Governments of his Father. A fine Match! It will make the Marshal die of Joy. His Son is a prudent Man; he loves the King, and is beloved of him; he fears God, and will be blessed of him: He has a fine Regiment, and Pensions will be annexed to it: He likes his Profession, and will distinguish himself in it. In fine, I am highly pleased with this Affair. When Mademoiselle d'Aubigné was born I did not foresee so much Happiness. She is well educated, and has more Prudence than is common at her Age: She is pious, and she is rich. Do you think M. de Noailles has made a bad Bargain? I believe both Sides are contented, and are ready to confess they would have been satisfied with less. Adieu,
my

my dearest ; you are very sensible I have not Time to write long Letters, or at least that it is not fit I should seem to have it.

LETTER CCXI.

From the Duchess of Burgundy to Madam de Maintenon.

I AM excessively sorry, my dear Aunt, that I always displease you. I am firmly resolved to amend, and to play no more at the sad Game that makes me lose my Money and your Friendship. I beseech you not to speak of it, in Case I keep the Resolution I have taken. I shall not be able to console myself, seeing I have been the Cause of your Afflictions, nor will I ever forgive that cursed *Lanquenet*. I hope my future Conduct will atone for my Faults, and that I shall regain your Friendship. All I wish for, is to make myself an amiable Princess by my Behaviour : I flatter myself that I am not so far gone in Years, or my Reputation so much tarnished, but that I may in Time accomplish this. I am distracted at the Thoughts of having displeased you. I have forsaken God, and he has forsaken me : I hope with his Help, which I heartily pray for, I shall be able to amend. Restore me, dear Mamma, your Esteem and your Friendship, of which I have rendered myself

unworthy : I assure you I will deserve it : It will require a great deal of Time, but it shall be my sole Study from henceforth.

LETTER CCXII.*

From Racine to the same.

Paris, March 4, 1698.

Madam,

I had resolv'd to write to you about the Tax that has so greatly disorder'd my little Concerns ; but disliking my Letter, I only drew up a † Memorial, which Marshal *de*——— generously offer'd to put into your Hands, with a Request to present it to his Majesty.—This, Madam, is an ingenuous Account of my Behaviour in that Affair : But I hear that I have now a much more terrible one upon my Hands. I confess to you, that whilst I was so often giving this Lesson in the Play of *Esther*, *O King, drive away Calumny*, I little expected to be one Day attacked by Calumny. I am represented as a Caballer and a Rebel to the Church. Be so good, Madam, as to remember how many Times you have said, that the best Quality you found

* This Letter has been printed in the *Memoirs of John Racine*.

† That Memorial, as we find in the 26th Chapter of *Voltaire's Age of Louis XIV.* proved the Ruin of *Racine*.

in me, was, that I submitted like a Child to all that the Church believed and commanded, even in the smallest Things. I have made by your Orders near three thousand Verses on pious Subjects, in which I have spoken from the Fulness of my Heart, and given Vent to all the Sentiments that most abounded in me. Did it ever occur to you, that any body found one single Passage in them bordering upon Error?—As for Caballing, who is it that may not be accused of it, if they accuse a Man so devoted to the King as I am, a Man that spends all his Days in thinking of the King, informing himself of his Majesty's great Actions, and inspiring others with Sentiments of Love and Admiration? I dare say that the Grandees have been much fonder of my Conversation than I have been of theirs; but whatever Company I kept, God gave me Grace never to be ashamed of the King nor the Gospel. There are Witnesses still living, who could tell you how zealously they have often seen me combat a certain Fretfulness sometimes incident to those on whom the King has been most lavish of his Favours. And with what Face could I bear witness to Posterity, that this great Prince received no false Reports, even against such Persons as were most unknown to him, if I myself must woefully experience the contrary? But I know what may have occasioned so unjust an Accusation.

Accusation. I have an Aunt, who is Superior of *Port Royal*, and to whom I think myself under infinite Obligations: It was she that taught me to know God in my Infancy; and God was also pleased to make her the Instrument of reclaiming me from the Scenes of Folly and Misery, in which I was engaged during fifteen Years of my Life. Could I, without being the most worthless of Men, refuse her my little Helps in that Necessity? But to whom, Madam, did I apply, in order to assist her? I went to Father *la Chaise*, and laid before him all that I knew of the State of that House. I dare not believe that I persuaded him; but he seemed pleased with my Frankness, and, embracing me, assured me that he would be, as long as he lived, my Servant and my Friend. I can protest before God, that I neither know nor frequent any Man suspected of the least Innovation: I spend my Days, as retired as I can, with my Family, and am, as it were, never in the World but when I am at *Marli*. I assure you, Madam, that the Condition I am in is very worthy of the Compassion which I have always perceived in you for the Unfortunate. I am deprived of the Honour of seeing you: I scarcely dare any longer depend on your Protection, tho' it is the only Thing I have endeavoured to deserve. I might at least

seek Comforts in my Labours; but judge how they must be imbibited by the Thought, that this same great Prince, who is constantly my Theme, does perhaps look upon me as a Man more worthy of his Wrath than of his Kindness. I am, with the most profound Respect, &c.

LETTER CCXIII.

To Madam de la Maison-Port.

IBEG you would remember, my dear *Daughter, that you are a Christian and a Nun. Your Life ought to be hidden, mortified, and deprived of all Pleasures. You don't repent the Course you have chosen: Take it then with its Austerities and its safe Sides. You would have had more Pleasures in the World, and, according to Appearances, you would have been lost in it. Either *Racine*, in discoursing with you about the Theatre, would have drawn you to it; or the Archbishop of *Cambray* would have fallen in with or even transcended, your refined Notions, and so made you a Quietist. Enjoy therefore the Happiness of Security, Would you rather have your House more splendid than solid? But what would it avail you to have made

* An Epithet used by Persons in Authority to Nuns or other single Women.

a brilliant Figure in it, if you were buried under the Ruins of it? Why has God given you so much Wit and so much Judgment? Do you think they are given you to prattle, to read pleasant Things, to judge of Works in Prose and Verse, to compare Persons of Merit and Authors with one another? These Designs can be none of his. The Talents he has given you are to be employed in a great Work ordained for his Glory. Turn your Thoughts that Way, and they will be as solid as the others are frivolous. All that you have received is to be improved: You are to give an Account of it. Your Mind must become as simple as your Heart. What would you learn, my dear Daughter? I'll warrant you, upon long Experience, that after having read a great deal, you'll find that you know nothing. Your Religion ought to be all your Knowledge. Your Time is no longer yours. God has given you as much Reason as another might acquire by Reading. I thank him that you take delight in Prayer both public and private: I never see you at this Exercise without regretting that I am not a Nun.

LETTER CCXIV.

To the same.

1699.

IT is not amiss for you to be sometimes troubled in Mind : It will make you more humble, and you will feel by Experience, that, whatever Talents we may have, we find no Ressource within ourselves. You will never be contented, my dear Daughter, till you love God with your whole Heart; which I don't say with respect to the Profession you have engaged in. *Solomon* has long ago told you, that after having fought, and found, and tasted of all Sorts of Pleasures, he confessed, that besides loving God and serving him, all was Vanity and Vexation of Spirit. Oh ! that I could give you all my Experience ! That I could shew you the Heaviness that preys upon the Spirits of the Great, and how hard they find it to put out their Days ! Don't you see that I pine away with Melancholy in the midst of a Fortune that one could hardly have imagined, and that nothnig but God's Assistance keeps me from sinking under it ? I have been young and handsome, I have tasted of Pleasures, I have been beloved every where ; when grown a little older, I passed some Years in improving my Mind with ingenious Company :

I

I have attained to the highest Favour, and I protest to you, that all Stations leave a frightful Vacuum, an Uneasiness, a Weariness, a Desire to know something else, because in all this there is nothing that gives full Satisfaction. We find no Rest till we have given ourselves to God; but it must be with that determined Will which I sometimes talk to you about. Then we find that there is nothing farther to be sought, that we have attained to that which is the only good thing in this World. We meet with Vexations, but we have at the same Time a solid Consolation, and Peace of Heart in the midst of the greatest Afflictions.

LETTER CCXV.

To the same.

CAN we be devout when we please? Yes, my dear Daughter, we may; and it is not lawful for us to think that God's Assistance will fail us. *Seek and ye shall find, knock at the Door, and it shall be opened to you;* these are his own Words; but we must seek him with Humility and Simplicity. St. Paul knew much more than Ananias; he nevertheless goes to him, and learns from him what he was to you. You will never learn this of yourself. Be humble. You have some Remains of Pride, which you disguise to

yourself, and mistake for Wit : No longer harbour this ; much less should you seek to gratify it with a Confessor. The most simple Confessor is the best for you, and you ought to submit to him as a Child. How will you be able to bear up under the Crosses which God may send you in the Course of your Life, if you stumble at the Accent of a *Norman* or a *Picard*, or dislike a Man because he is less sublime than *Racine* ? He, poor Man, would have much edified you, had you been a Witness to his Humility in his Sickness, and how penitent he appeared for his witty Inquiries : He did not then look out for a fashionable Director ; he saw none but an honest Priest of his own Parish. I have seen another great Genius, the Author of some fine Pieces, which he avoided printing, because he would not be ranked as an Author : And he burnt them all ; a few Fragments only of his remain in my Memory. Let us not spend our Time upon what we must soon or late renounce. You have not yet lived many Years, and still you have your Softness of Heart and Delicacy of Mind to renounce. Go to God, my dear Daughter, and all Things shall be given you. Apply to me as often as you please. I should be glad to lead you to God ; In so doing I contribute to his Glory ; behold the Happiness of a Person I have

always

always had a particular Friendship for, and do great Service to an Institution that is far from indifferent to me.

LETTER CCXVI.

To the Duchess of Burgundy.

1700.

HOPE not for perfect Felicity : There is none upon Earth ; and if there was, it would not be at Court.

Grandeur has its Afflictions, and frequently more severe than those of private Persons. In private Life, Men inure themselves to Vexations : At Court this Habit is not to be acquired.

Your Sex is still more exposed to suffer, inasmuch as it is always in a State of Dependence. Be neither sorry for nor ashamed of this Dependence on a Husband, nor of any others that are in the Order of Providence.

Let the Duke of *Burgundy* be your best Friend and your only Confident.

Hope not for perfect Peace from your Union : The best Marriages are those where they bear alternately with one another with Mildness and Patience. There never was any without some Contradiction.

Be complaisant without setting too great a Value on your Civilities.

Require not equal Returns of Friendship : Men are commonly less tender than Women ; and you will be unhappy, if you are delicate in Friendship : 'Tis a Commerce in which one should always be Creditor.

Pray to God to keep you from Jealousy : Hope not to reclaim a Husband by Complaints, Taunts and Reproaches. The only Method is Patience and a sweet Temper : Impatience sours and alienates the Heart ; Mildness brings it back.

In making a Sacrifice of your Will, make no Claims on that of a Husband : Men are still more self-will'd than Women, because they are brought up with less Constraint. They are naturally tyrannical ; they are for Pleasures and Liberty, and would have Women renounce them. Inquire not whether their Prerogatives are well grounded ; be it sufficient for you that they are established : They are Masters ; and there remains nothing but to suffer and obey with a good Grace.

Speak, write, act, as if you had a thousand Witnesses : Depend upon it that soon or late every thing is known : It is very dangerous to write.

Trust no body with any thing that may do you a Prejudice, if told again : Take my Word for it, that Secrets the best kept, are kept only
for

for a Time ; The Court is the Region of Myſtery and Indiscretion.

They ſeldom or never give more than one Maxim to Princes, and that is Diſſimulation ; It is a falſe one, and leads into great Inconveniencies. For my Part I love a prudent Frankneſs.

Hear tenderly the Requeſts of the Unfortunate. God cauſed you to be born in this high Rank only to afford you the Pleaſure of doing Good. The Power of ſerving and making Men happy, is the real Indemnification for the Fatigues, the diſagreeable Incidents, and the Servitude of your Station.

Be compaſſionate to them that apply to you in order to obtain Favours ; and not importunate to thoſe that diſtribute or beſtow them.

Be not concerned in any Intrigue, whatever Intereſt or Glory you may be made to expect from it.

Love your Relations ; but let *France* alone be your Country.

Guard againſt the Inclination to be witty. Too much Wit gives Pain to thoſe who have but little ; Wit will gain you the Hatred of the Majority, and perhaps leſſen you in the Eſteem of the Wiſe.

LETTER

LETTER CCXVII.

*To Madam de S. G——.**Novemb. 11. 1700.*

THEY are actually debating in Council the Fate of *France* and *Spain*, and of all *Europe*: A War is unavoidable, unless we take a shameful Course; and that I cannot apprehend from a Council in which the King presides. The Members of it are much divided in their Opinions; At this Time, it's certain, they dispute with great Vivacity. The Duke of *Burgundy* is against the Opinion of the Dauphin: Reason is said to be on the Duke's Side, and Glory on his Father's. The Duke de *Beauvilliers* will give his Vote for the Partition-Treaty, and the Chancellor for accepting purely and simply this fine * Succession. The Dauphin will take a Medium between these two Opinions: He will be for renouncing the Will of the late King of *Spain*, and the Partition-Treaty too: This is said to be the only Expedient to avoid a War; and he is well advised.

LETTER CCXVIII.

To the same.

THE Dauphin triumphs: He has shewn that the King was too equitable to debar him

* The *Spanish* Monarchy.

from

from a Succession, which by all the Laws is due to him; that he renounced it in favour of the Duke of *Anjou*, and would be content with saying all his Life, 'The King my Father, and the King my Son.' The Duke of *Burgundy* falls in with this Sentiment, and says that he did oppose it with no other Design than to clear up the Matter, and that he freely gives up all his Rights to his Brother. A few Days will elapse before the Public is informed of all this. The Duke of *Anjou* is not to be treated as a King till after the *Spanish* Ambassador's public Audience. Pray to God that he would bless all the King's Designs, and sanctify all his Thoughts.

LETTER CCXIX.

From the Duke of Berry to Madam de Maintenon.

December, 1700.

WE had Yesterday a melancholy parting with the King of *Spain*: Our Adieus were very tender: I never better experienced how much Friendship I have for him. I beseech you, Madam, to grant me your's, pursuant to the Hopes you have given me. I am afraid of tiring you, and therefore conclude.

LET-

LETTER CCXX.

From the Dukes of Burgundy to the same.

January 16, 1701.

ENClosed, my dear Aunt, is a Letter from the King of Spain: You'll see he has not forgot you; and that if Crowns are apt to make some Heads giddy, they make no Change in the Hearts of the *Bourbons*. I give you the very Words of the Duke of *Burgundy*, who, very probably, may have learned this Phrase from the Archbishop of *Cambray*.

LETTER CCXXI.

From the Queen Dowager of Spain to the same.

I Have read with Pleasure, my dear Marchioness, that you approve the Precautions I have taken to do nothing of Consequence without the Consent of the Catholic King, and particularly of the King of *France*, my Brother and Protector. As to what I wrote to you, concerning my Intention to make the Duke de *Saint Pierre* my *Major domo*, I hoped that you would have mentioned it to the King my Brother; but you tell me that you have not done

it:

it: As I think, my dear Marchioness, that this Duke's being near my Person would better suit the Interest of the two Kings, you'll oblige me if you speak to the King, my dear Brother, about it, and induce him to write to the King his Grandson, my dear Nephew. I am, dear Marchioness *de Maintenon*, very much your's.

LETTER CCXXII.

To *Madam* de S. G——.

March 2, 1701.

I Know all that has been said against *Chamillard*: But they don't know that he refused to succeed *M. de Barbezieux*, and that the King insisted upon his accepting that Place, because it is expedient, in time of War, that one Head should have the two Employments. *Chamillard* is an honest Man; and if he manages the Finances of the Kingdom as he does those of *St. Cyr*, we shall have no Occasion to cry out for a *Colbert*. The King has promised to share with him the Labour in the Department of the War: Nothing but this could have overcome his Diffidence. The Duchess of *Burgundy* has taken a Liking to him, and he is to dispatch Business sometimes with the Duke, in order to form him to it. His honest and civil Demeanor has gained him the Affection of all

Ranks

Ranks and Degrees. He will employ our Friends, and not boggle, like *Louvois* and his Son, at doing Business with the King in my Apartment. The Count *d'Avaux* is negotiating an Accomodation, but his Success is much doubted of: In the mean time the King remains calm and tranquil: He knows more of these Matters than all his Courtiers put together.

LETTER CCXXIII.

To Madam de Caylus.

Marli, July 17, 1701.

I Am little inclined, my dear Niece, to ask Favours: The Number of Employments is but small, and yet there are more Places than Men equal to them. The Duke *de Vendome* is to go to the Army in *Lombardy*; the Mischief is done, and the Remedy not so easy to be found. We lead an odd Kind of Life here: Would fain have Wit, Gallantry, and Invention; but all these have entirely failed us; 'tis now quite out of the Question. We play, we yawn, we droop; we get Mischief from one another; we hate, we envy, we carefs, and tear each other in Pieces.

LET-

LETTER CCXXIV.

*From the Duchess Dowager of Orleans to
Madam de Maintenon.*

March 12, 1702.

I Must acquaint you, Madam, with my Joy at a new Favour I have received from the King, which is, that he allowed me to see him yesterday in his Closet. As I am indebted to you for all his Favours, and as it is by your Means that my Reconciliation with the King has been made, my Gratitude to you encreases every Day, and my Friendship will very soon equal the Esteem which is due to you.

LETTER CCXXV.

To Madam de S. G——.

April 3, 1702.

THE Death of the Prince of Orange will make no Alteration in Affairs. The Princess Anne has been acknowledged Queen of England: 'Tis a terrible Blow to the lawful King: However, he is a little consoled by the Refusal to associate Prince George of Denmark in the Royalty: But what Comfort is this! There is no solid Consolation to be found, but in Piety

* This is the Expression in the Original.

and

and Resignation to the Will of the King of Kings and Master of Empires. The Dutch affect to fear for the Liberties of *Europe*, and are not afraid even for their own Liberty. The King will carry on the War vigorously: He was at first a little averse to it; but it is become necessary, and we must yield to it. The Orders of Marshal *Boufflers* are very extensive; and they say nothing can be finer than the Instructions which *M. Chamillard* has drawn up for the Campaign in *Flanders*: The Duke of *Burgundy* will have nothing to do but follow that Plan: You are right in judging it expedient to prevent his doing Things out of his own Head: Courage alone will not make a great Captain; his Age does not admit of much Prudence. *M. de Vendome* will restrain in *Italy* the King of *Spain's* Fire; but who is to check his own? It is said, Prince *Eugene* will bring nothing but Delay against our Vivacity. What shall I say to you of *Catinat*? He knows his Business, but he knows not God: The King does not like to trust irreligious Men with his Affairs. *M. de Catinat* thinks his proud Philosophy sufficient for all Things: 'Tis great Pity he loves not God. My Health declines daily, and I no longer know myself in that Picture which was

so

so like me in 1694. Let us think of Death.
Have we not lived long enough?

LETTER CCXXVI.

*From the Duke of Burgundy to Madam
de Maintenon.*

Madam, August 15, 1702.

I Desire of the King my Return: I presume a single Word is sufficient to give you my Meaning. I dare not say more, lest I should engage you to an Answer, which I beg you would not make, should it be in the least inconvenient for you.

LETTER CCXXVII.

To Madam de S. G——.

Marli, June 3, 1702.

TO-morrow I shall go to *Maintenon*, and should be very glad to see you there. *Mademoiselle d'Aumale* is as much grieved as myself: Nothing but your Reason and your Fortitude can console me. In vain I say to myself, that * he died like a Saint; that he long ago began to prepare for this dreadful Passage; that he spent the last Years of his Life in the

* *M. d'Aubigné*, her Brother, Governor of *Berry*, &c.

Fear of God: All these Considerations make my Sorrow less reasonable, without alleviating it. *M. de la Rochefoucault* was right in saying, that Reason and Religion have scarcely any Influence over human Nature, in these Cases. My Niece is quite desolate, and stirs not out of her Closet: It seems she finds no Pleasure in any thing but giving way to her Grief. God intends to wean me from this World and prepare me for the other, in afflicting my Heart so sensibly. I could be very glad to pass the Remainder of the Summer at *Maintenon*; but the King will not hear a Word about it, and you know that it is many Years since I have given up my own Will. I submit to all Things; I make an Offering to God of my Afflictions; I beg of him to call me to himself, if my Death is necessary to my Salvation, and my Life of no Use to the King and his People. His Will be done! It belongs to him to chastise us, and 'tis our Duty to suffer.

LETTER CCXXVIII.

To the same.

July 18, 1703.

OUR Friend is now very much eased. *M. Desmarais* has taken a great Burthen from him: The War will go on the better for it.
The

The M. d'Q—— would have refused that Post, had the King offered it to him: Those who know not how steady he is in his Purposes, and how hard it is to find Men of Abilities, are wrong in being surprized that we continue *Chamillard*, who is very prudent, laborious and penetrating. The Troubles in the *Cevennes* are but trifling: They are occasioned by the *Hugonots* of the Mountains, who may easily be reduced: It is needless for the King to descend to all the Particulars of this Revolt: It could not cure the Distemper, and might make it much worse. *Vauban* writes to us, that the Duke of *Burgundy* will reap a great deal of Honour from the Siege of *Brisac*: As it was fortified by him, he must needs know how to take it. The Army is in excellent Order, and *Chamillard* has made so good Provision in all Respects, that we shall have no Complaints this Campaign. The Dukes had taken it into her Head to accompany her Husband in this Expedition; the King laughed at it, and so did I: She was nettled at it. We have made up the Breach; so that you may undeceive those who say, that we are embroiled without any Hopes of a Reconciliation.

LET-

LETTER CCXXIX.

*To the same.**Versailles, August 30, 1794.*

I HAVE had a terrible Storm to weather out:

I will never more meddle with any Affair: If the three Marshals knew what a Consternation the Loss of this Battle has thrown us into, they would very quickly repair their Oversight: The King cannot get out of his Mind the fifteen thousand *Frenchmen* that surrendered without firing one Shot. Pray to God to bless his Arms. *Chamillard* is the calmest of us all; but it is owing to the King's encouraging him: Indeed they have nothing to reproach him with: Would to God we could say as much of the Generals! What do they say in *Paris* of this whole Affair? *Madam de Montigni* is at *St. Cyr*: I shall go thither next *Monday* to bemoan our Calamities. Our Sisters greatly comfort me: They envy me my Place, and I envy them their Tranquility. I never go to that House, but I depart with Regret, and repent that I did not make myself a Nun: I should then have had nothing to mind but my own Frailties and Afflictions; whereas at present I must mind nothing but the Afflictions of other People, and forget myself. My Niece is in perfect Health. I send you the Mercer, who

has promised me Speed : He will deliver you an hundred Louis d'ors, which you'll give to the *Urfelines* : I pity those poor Girls. I cannot make out the two last Lines of your Letter ; either my Eyes are bad, or your Pen was so.

L E T T E R CCXXX.

To the same.

1705.

WHAT do you complain of, my dear Niece?

Is it that I have not wrote to you about the Death of *M. de Caylus*? You know whether I have been concerned at it, and we ought not to stand upon Compliments. I am so infirm and so old, that I confine myself to Letters of Necessity. What means that Dependence you would have on me? You are at Age, and possess the Faculty of behaving well : What Change would you make, at the Eve of my Death? You will not be weak enough to marry again : Live like a good Mother ; don't launch again into the World ; chuse a select Number of Friends ; receive but few Visits from Men, and let them be Persons of Probity : Live according to the old Fashion ; have always a Maid at work in your Chamber, when you are with a Man : Distrust the soberest and discreetest of them ; distrust yourself ; Believe me, as a Person of Experience,

who

who loves you : You are still young and handsome ; in God's Name don't expose yourself to Hazards ; let the Concerns of your Children occupy you ; serve God without caballing ; despise nobody, and be headstrong in nothing : Follow the common Way of Life ; be simple and plain, and excuse this short Lesson, which flows from tender Affection : It is well worth a Compliment.

LETTER CCXXXI.

To the same.

YOU ought to be upon your Guard : You have Enemies and envious Persons. Some are generous when they see us in Distress ; but there is so little Reality in such Generosity, that in Prosperity they can no longer endure us. If they see you in great Favour with me, it will encrease the Number of your Enemies. Give them nothing to make a Handle of : Observe a Medium, between giving yourself up to Society, and burying yourself in Solitude : You could not hold out under the latter, and the other Course would draw you away farther from God, than even the Court could do. The Abbé Gobelin, who was a Man of good Sense, was extremely glad when he saw me quit the Hotel de Richelieu in order to settle at St. Germain ; and I often perceive he was in the right.

Adieu,

Adieu, dear Niece; remember there are Spies about you. I recommend you to God: If you are his, all Things will go well.

LETTER CCXXXII.

To Madam de Caylus.

Sept. 1705.

HOW wise are you, in leaving all Things to God, without so much Precaution and Anxiety! Such Care is intirely useles: We know not what we would have, and God seems often to take Delight in disconcerting all our Measures. When you have nothing else to do, I beg you would chuse a Gown for me: It is necessary to have some Gold in it; the outward Dignity must be kept up, though the Person ought to think of nothing but a Coffin. Your Enemies vent their Spleen and Malice here against you: They say there never was any Thing but Policy in your Devotion, and that you seriously think of marrying again; but your Conduct will force them to be silent. Don't be alarmed at any thing you hear concerning me: I am on the Theatre of the Great World; my Name is often the Subject of Conversation. It is quite unpleasant to end our Days among People with whom we did not begin them.

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LETTER

LETTER CCXXXIII.

To the same.

1706.

IT is doing the Devil's Office to do more than I desire you, and to tempt me with one of the richest Garments: I resist the Temptation, the public Calamities having made me penurious. Your Letter has told me nothing: I was apprized of the wise Answer of Father *de la Tour*: He is wise in all respects. Would to God he were not at the Head of a Congregation, where, as some say, suspicious Maxims are held! As for your Part, my dear Niece, suffer the World to say what they please: You cannot hate and despise it too much. Let not your Piety droop, shew the World that your Reputation did not depend on a Party that loved and admired you. Be in Love with the Contempt into which you are going to fall, and above all Things please the Rector of *St. Sulpitius*. Don't be vexed at what is said: The only Way to triumph over Calumny is to despise it. Adieu; the * Battle won in *Italy* makes

* This must be the Battle of *Calcinaro*, where the Duke of *Verdome* defeated the Army of the Allies, commanded by Count *Reventlow*, in the Absence of Prince *Eugene*, killed six thousand of their Men,

makes me resolve to wear my fine Cloaths: I shall appear in Green, if our Troops take *Barcelona*, and dress in Rose Colour if the Archduke be taken Prisoner.

LETTER CCXXXIV.*

From the Duke of Orleans to Madam de Maintenon.

1706.

NOI Grief, Madam, can withstand your Consolations, and the Kindness you express for me. After the Assurances you give me, that Friendship has as great a Share in it as Compassion, it would be wrong in me not to be calm and composed. If your Letter was not filled with Encomiums on me, I could read it over and over as long as I live: for it shews me with infinite Pleasure all the Gratitude I owe the King: And though you endeavour to draw a Veil over that which I owe you, I see

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through

Men, took a thousand Horses, six Pieces of Cannon, and almost all their Baggage. Count *Reventlaw* sustained vigourously, and even with Advantage, the first Charges of the *French*, but at last was forced to retire in great Disorder and Confusion.

* This Letter was wrote after the raising of the Siege of *Turin*, occasioned by the Weakness of the Duke de la *Feuillade*, and of Marshal *Marfin*, the Duke of *Orleans* having had Orders to conform to the Advice and Opinion of the latter.

through the Artifice, and particularly where you put me in Mind of looking up to the first Cause of great Events. When I shall be able to tell you, without Hypocrisy, that I am devout, I shall feel a perfect Joy in making you my Confident: Such as are truly so, have so much Sincerity and Generosity, that a well-bred Man has stronger Dispositions to Devotion than others. Continue, Madam, your Favours to me: I am ready to do every thing that may deserve them.

LETTER CCXXXV.

To Madam de Caylus.

April, 1707.

WHAT has happened to me this Day, in regard to the Bishop of Auxerre, is not the Cause of my resolving to make the following Declaration to my Relations, viz. never more to ask any thing for them: Let them go to work now as they will do when I am dead: They will then apply to the Ministry; they will get their Friends to bestir themselves. I thought I had done enough, in putting you in a Way to complete what I had begun for making your Fortune: But I perceive Madam de — is thoroughly persuaded that I ought to find Matches for her Daughters; the Boys will come next, and your Son follow after: *Murce's* little ones are growing up; the Father puts in
for

for every vacant Post: *Madam de St. Hermine* with a rueful Countenance presents to me a great Girl, whom I shall much wrong if I don't settle her in the World, and who is to be followed by five more; and then little *Villette*, him also I must provide for. Consider, my dear Niece, with a little Reason and Equity, what Sort of Figure I should make about the King, were I every Day begging new Favours of him: If he granted them, he would no longer have any thing at his Disposal; if he denied me, it would grieve me; if he grieved me, he would be too good natured not to be sorry at it himself: And thus I should render myself the Plague of his Life. Do you think God had such Design in placing me near him? This, my dear Niece, is my final Resolution. I shall see you all with a great deal of Pleasure, when I no longer dread your Proposals and Requests: I shall hear of them from the King, who will be informed of them by his Ministers; I shall give him such Answers as I think may be of Service to you, and may do it with more Boldness, and perhaps more effectually, when he knows that I am not prepossessed. Be that as it may, I shall not alter my Resolution; I have not taken it without mature Deliberation; I have long consulted with myself about it, and am determined. Impart this Resolution to all my Relations.

LETTER CCXXXVI.

*To the same.**June, 1709.*

I Could be glad to see you often, my dear Niece; but the melancholy Ideas I have of my Place, joined to old Age, which is burthen-some to others as well as myself, deter me from it, and make me shut myself up in my Closet at St. Cyr: Therefore manage your Concerns without depending on me, taking me when you can, and leaving me without being uneasy about it. I advise you to get thirteen Masses said at the Altar of the Blessed Virgin in the Cathedral, thirteen at St. Genevieve, thirteen at the Church of the Holy Ghost, and thirteen at King James's Sepulchre.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

From the Duke of Orleans to Madam de Maintenon.

1708.

I Am not devout, Madam; but when ever I become so, you shall be the first to whom I will impart it. I request a Continuation of your Kindness to me, and that you will be pleased to charge yourself with the Thanks I owe to the King.

LETTER

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

To Madam de Caylus.

1709.

MY dear Niece, believe it for my Tenderness Sake and upon my Experience: I have tried every Thing, and find we must acquiesce in *Solomon's* Sentence, *All is Vexation of Spirit.* I cannot open my Heart to any body; but though I conceal from you the Nature of my Afflictions, I can however truly say, that the World affords nothing similar: I am often ready to burst; the King does not perceive it; and when he leaves my Apartment, all my Comfort is to be alone, and water my Pillow with my Tears. I am not ignorant of the Tattle of those that do not like me; they impute to me whatever happens, as if Events were at my Command; according to their Notions my Devotion is Hypocrisy; they make a Jest of the Severity of my Morality. and charge me with not having always been so severe. I am not surprized at their suspecting my former Conduct; but they who talk at this rate have either been very licentious in their Youth, or did not know me at that Time of Life. It is vexatious to be obliged to live with any other Folks than those of our own Century; but it's the Misfortune of those who live too long.

LETTER CCXXXIX.

From Cardinal Gualterio to Madam de Maintenon.

Todi, August 5, 1710.

I Flatter myself that you will vouchsafe, Madam, to pardon the Liberty I take in expressing to you the Confusion, and the most animated and respectful Sense of Gratitude, I am penetrated withall, at the Receipt of so great a Benefit as the Abby of *St. Remy at Rheims*, with which the King has been pleased to gratify me: I am sensible, Madam, of what I owe you on this Occasion: I return you my most humble Thanks for it, and request the Continuation of your Protection.

LETTER CCXL.

From Cardinal d'Estrees to the same

1711.

WHAT a Load of Honours, Favours and Kindnesses are heaped on me in the Letter with which you have honoured me! Have I not indeed, Madam, great Reason to triumph? Though I regret the Trouble I have given you to read my long Letter, and the Pains you have taken to answer it, I must own to you that I cannot repent of it, since I have received such valuable Marks of your Kindness. I shall eternally be with infinite Respect, &c.

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LETTER CCXLI.

From the same to the same.

August 28, 1711.

Madam,

BY the Death of Marshal Boufflers the Post of Captain of the Guards becomes vacant. The Summit of my Wishes is to see my Kindred more intimately attached by this Domestic Employment to the Person of my Master and Benefactor, to whom, in my Solitude and Inaction, my Heart does not give fewer Demonstrations of Affection and Zeal, than I endeavoured to give him in the Employments with which he formerly honoured me. I would have the Satisfaction, before I die, to see the Marshal d'Estrees in the same Post near his Majesty, which the famous John d'Estrees, his Great Grandfather held under Francis I. and Henry II. Desiring nothing for myself, whom his Majesty has fully satisfied, I must be excused if I ask for a Name that may be extinct very soon after me; but I would have him end his Days in that honourable Post.

I am, &c.

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LETTER CCXLII.

To Madam de Caylus.

Versailles, Feb. 10, 1712.

MY little Finger has told me, that the Dispatches from *England* are very agreeable: We must thereby comfort ourselves for other Contradictions. I thought to have gone to *St. Cyr*; the King has hindered me; he is to call upon me at Two o'Clock; perhaps he will not come. I am perfectly ignorant of what I shall do to-morrow: All I know is, that I am very troublesome to others and to myself. This Morning I ordered to be brought to me, not the famous *Annals* in which the Deeds of my Reign are penn'd, but a prodigious Heap of cast off Cloaths, all which I have distributed. Let us not talk of our Relations: They'll not be sensible of that I have done for them till we meet together in the Valley of *Jehosaphat*: I am often reproached by them, God alone knows what I suffer.

LETTER CCXLIII.

To Madam de F——.

Versailles, 1712.

MUCH may be said on both Sides of the Question. *M. d'Aubigné's* Fortune is large enough; and there is nothing illustrious in that Family.

Family. *M. Rajat is very well respected in his Province; but that Consideration has no Weight at all here. Recollect all that is said of that poor Man, *le Moine*: If I concern myself, in the least, with this Affair, much more will be said of him. The young Lady is amiable; she has good Sense and Health of Body; she is affable and pious: These are material Articles. I therefore think, since my Advice is required, that M. d'Aubigné ought to pursue this Affair, if Inclination leads him to it; and let him drop it, if he has Wealth only in View. As for what is called my Protection, you know there are no d'Aubigné's to whom I have not granted it, and sometimes I have even granted it to the bare Name.

LETTER CCXLIV.

From Cardinal d'Estreés to Madam de Maintenon.

Sept. 6, 1712.

Madam,

I WILL forthwith deliver to the Rector of *St. Sulpitius* the Resignation of the Benefice which you have piously destined towards the Support of the Seminary. What an admirable Letter have you wrote to me! It includes every

* Intendant of *Rouen*.

thing

thing in few Words; ingenious Turns; refined Thoughts; well-chosen Expressions; in short, 'tis not to be equal'd. I never used myself to this kind of Phrase till now; nor shall I ever make use of it but to yourself. I glory in your Correspondence among my Friends; and methinks, in thus setting myself off, I innocently dawb over the Wrinkles of my old Age. I am eternally, &c.

LETTER CCXLV.

From the same to the same.

I KNOW, Madam, what Answer you gave me to the Rector of St. Sulpice, when he acquainted you with what I think of the Abbé d'Esfrées. I am so sensibly touched with it, that tho' I fear to tire you with my Letters, I cannot forbear expressing my Gratitude to you for it. I dare tell you, that as I am become very careless about human Affairs, with respect to myself, on account of my great Age, and perhaps from some better Motive, 'tis only by this single Article that I yet cleave to the World. I confess it is with Concern I see that the Abbé d'Esfrées, among so many Men of equal Rank, honoured with the Benefactions of our great King, for indeed this Epithet is due to him; that the Abbé d'Esfrées, I say, is the only one who

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who receives no Marks of his Favour. But I perceive my Letter is long: I should make it much longer, were I to set down all the Sentiments of Respect and Veneration, and shall I say it, of Admiration with which I have been, am, and shall ever be, &c.

LETTER CCXLVI.

To the Cardinal de Noailles.

I SHALL write to you no more about this unlucky Affair; too many Reasons forbid my intermeddling in it. I will resume the Character that becomes me, which is to pray to God that all Things may turn out for his Glory, the Good of the Church, and your's in particular, my Lord, which I am still concerned for.

LETTER CCXLVII.*

To the same.

YOU are sufficiently acquainted with me to know what I think of the new Discovery: But for many Reasons I ought to forbear speaking. It belongs not to me to judge and to condemn: My Province is only to be silent, to pray for the King, for the Church, and for you. I

* The Chapter of *Jansenism*, in *Voltaire's* Age of *Louis XIV.* throws a great Light on this and the other Letters to Cardinal Noailles.

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have

have given your Letter to the King ; it has been read : 'Tis all I can say to you, being oppressed with Grief.

LETTER CCXLVIII.

To the same.

'TIS not my Business to judge and to condemn ; all I have to do is to be silent, to submit blindly, and pray for the Church and the King, and for you, my Lord, whose Interests will ever be dear to me.

LETTER CCXLIX.

To the same.

YOU'LL never deceive yourself, my Lord, while you rely on what you call my Kindnesses. - I can never cease respecting my Archbishop, esteeming your Virtues, and, if I dare say it, loving your Person : But it is true, that in all these Sentiments I now find nothing but Bitterness.

LETTER CCL.

From Cardinal Gualterio to Madam de Maintenon.

Rome, Dec. 1713.

I KNOW, Madam, how much his Majesty has the Affairs of Religion at Heart ; and accordingly

Accordingly I redouble the Prayers and Wishes which every good Catholic ought to make for dissipating the Storm that has been raised; and I hope, thro' the pious Endeavours of the King, and so many wise and learned Men who have undertaken this great Work, that it will succeed. You know, Madam, for how many Reasons my Joy will be complete if this happens. I long for the Time which his Majesty has been pleased to fix for paying my Respects to him: I hope to find him in good Health: We have older Men here, who enjoy an excellent State of Health. His Life is of so great Importance to the public Good, and especially to the Church, that we must not doubt but he is preserved for our Sakes by a particular Providence. All Things are quiet here, except what relates to the Affairs of the Constitution *Unigenitus*, which disturbs this Court no less than it does *France*. It is to be wished that we may always act in Concert with the King, as it is impossible to err in following his Councils.

LETTER
 FROM CARDINAL GUALTIERO DE ALBANO
 to the MARQUESS DE MANTOUA
 Rome, Dec. 1713
 how much his Majesty
 has the Affairs of Religion at Heart; and ac-
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L E T T E R CCLI.

*From the same to the same.**Todi, Jan. 20, 1714.*

I Flatter myself, Madam, that a Peace will soon be concluded, and that his Majesty will then have no other Occupation than to make all Things flourish in his Kingdom: The Good of Religion, especially, is greatly interested therein; he is the firmest Support of it; and the Pains he takes about the Constitution very sensibly prove it: Without this, great Dissentions might, perhaps, have arisen. It seems to me that they are very attentive here to what passes in the Assembly, and earnestly wish to see it break up. His Holiness has not yet given me an Audience; but I have no Reason to doubt that he will. I shall intimate to him, that the Church has nothing to fear under so great a King, who acts so zealously for her Interest. As to my Sentiments towards his Majesty, you are acquainted with them. I owe him every Thing, since from his powerful Hand alone I received Assistance in the Time of my Adversity: I continually pray for his Conservation, and for your's, Madam, who are my great Protectress.

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L E T T E R C C L I I .

*From M. * de Mailly to the same.*

THOSE happier Days, which your Goodness, Madam, seemed to request for me, are they not yet arrived? a Man, whose Misfortunes so sensibly affected the greatest, the noblest, the most generous, and the most devout Soul in the World, cannot be destitute of Hope, when such a Soul has so large a Field to display its Power in. A blue Ribbon, a Post near the King's Person, vacant Abbeys; I don't mention the Archbishoprick, a Charge requiring Qualifications superior to any in me. I don't say, Madam, that if the Lifts were open'd to the Disputants, and Rivalship took Place as in the Countries where the Council of *Trent* is received, the Competitors would not discourage me. The retired Life which my bad Fortune made me lead in my Youth, allowed me to bestow more Time in Study than some other Men. I think I have sufficiently shewn my Disinterestedness and want of Ambition, since, when I might have revived again in me the Mortifications I received from the King against his Inclination, I

* Archbishop of *Arles*, and afterwards Archbishop of *Rheims* and Cardinal.

chose

chose rather to live retired in my Diocese. This, Madam, is what emboldens me to represent to you, that *Rheims* especially calls for a Man who, by his Learning and his strict Adherence to sound Doctrine, may repair the Mischiefs formerly introduced; watch and combat the rising Errors, and maintain the good Regulations his Majesty is endeavouring to establish. The Zeal you have always had against Innovations, should be exerted in restraining them for the future; for I often sigh and groan, Madam, at the Thoughts that the Church cannot always have the Props which God now gives her: I constantly pray for her Preservation, and am,
&c.

LETTER CCLIII.

From the same to the same.

Madam.

I AM setting out for *Rheims*; 'tis in trouble-some Times that a Man should be at his Post. Expect no Thanks for your Benefits: All my Gratitude for them cannot prevail on me to thank you for your excessive Kindness. I lived happy and tranquil; and now that easy, agreeable Life is going to be succeeded by an Hydra of Affairs, a Multitude of Difficulties and Traverses. I hope you will vouchsafe always to
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honour me with your Protection : But I stand in much greater need of your Counfels, and of the Penetration of a Person animated by the Wisdom of God. You'll permit me to have Recourſe thereto upon Occaſion ; I am too ſenſible of my Weakneſs, to take upon me ſo heavy a Burthen without ſuch Aſſiſtance. The Pope, notwithstanding that Predilection ſo often boaſted of, has reſuſed to grant me the leaſt Abatement on my Bulls : They are yet diſpatched ; conſequently I may yet make another Puſh for it. A Letter from you, Madam, would give Weight to the Attempt : But if it ſhould be ever ſo little inconvenient to you, I would think no more about it.

LETTER CCLIV.*

From the ſame to the ſame.

MADAM *de Mailly* is much ſurprized, Madam, to find herſelf, without ſuſpecting it, concerned in an Affair of Janſeniſm. I here give you a plain Narrative of the Fact. A Linen-Draper, who has long ſerved the Duke of *Burgundy*, and whoſe Brother is a Carthuſian at *Paris*, having heard that they were going to ſend his Brother to another Houſe, came to re-

* This Letter is to be referred to the Year 1711.

queſt

quest Madam de Mailly to obtain a Billet from the Duchess of Burgundy, signifying her Desire that they would let that Religious remain in his Convent at Paris. Madam de Mailly telling the Linen-Draper that she would not trouble the Princess about such a trifling Matter, out of Compassion wrote the Billet herself, which she directed to the Father Visitor of the Monastery. This was nothing else but an Imposition, which it was difficult to guard against. Father le Tellier, whom I have acquainted with this Affair, which he had not before heard of, promises me that he will not mention it to the King; and on this Occasion he related to me how *Madame* had been imposed upon in the same Manner, when the Archbishop of Rouen was nominated, and that, at the Request of Madam de Maubuisson, she had recommended to him two Ecclesiastics, Mess. Cœuet and de Laon, for Employment in his Diocese: *Madame* immediately rejected them, when she was made acquainted with their Characters. I shall go to-morrow to the Carthusians House to withdraw Madam de Mailly's Letter, and so bury this Affair in Oblivion.

* Probably the Duchess of Burgundy.

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LETTER CCLV.

From the Cardinal de Rohan to the same

Paris, Jan. 23, 1714.

Madam,

I DID not importune you while our Assembly was sitting: I was sensible of the Uneasiness which your Zeal for Religion and the good Cause gives you at this Juncture; and I could do nothing towards making you easier. I am now in a happier Situation: The * Bull will be accepted this Evening; and if some Prelates don't yet accept it in due Form, they talk in such a Manner as gives room to hope they will join us after the pastoral Instruction has been read. This Hope, Madam, gives me infinite Joy and Comfort. The Archbishop of *Rouen* has made us a Discourse replete with Zeal and Piety, and very suitable to the Dignity of the Episcopal-Character. The Bishop of *Auxerre* talked to us yesterday in such a Strain, that leaves no room to doubt of his coming this Day to such a Conclusion as we wish for. In the Course of this important Affair the King has given us very essential Proofs of his Piety, Benignity and Wisdom: The Assembly is thoroughly sensible of it,

*The very same which the Parliaments and Clergy of *France* are still at Dagger's drawing about.

and

and all the Members strive to outdo each other in the Encomiums on him. It was a great Happiness to have received the King's Orders from so able a Minister as M. *Voisin*. All Things have worked for Good, and Good will come of it. I sincerely compliment you upon it; happy, if by the Share I have had in this Affair, I may have deserved your Esteem, your Good-will, and your Protection. I have the Honour to be, with profound Respect, &c.

LETTER CCLVI.

To the Marchioness de——.

Feb. 9, 1714.

MY Resolution has been taken long ago, and that is Silence and Prayer. I love the Cardinal, (*Noailles*) but I hate his Obstinacy and deplore his Blindness. 'Tis I that begg'd for him the See of *Paris*: It is not surprizing that I should be mistaken; I am but a Woman: But how came the Bishop of *Chartres*, who advised me in that Choice, to be mistaken? Tell him that I can no longer see him; and pray to God to give Peace to his Church.

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LETTER CCLVII.

*From Cardinal Gualterio to Madam de
Maintenon.*

July 4, 1714.

WHEN shall I, Madam, have the Happiness of returning to *France*? I am impatient to throw myself once more at his Majesty's Feet, if he will please to permit it. It is exactly a Year since I had the Honour to wait on the King at *Marli*, and to assure you of my Respects: The Remembrance of it is pleasing to me, though at the same Time it makes me more sensibly feel my Absence and the Difference there is between this Country and *France*.

LETTER CCLVIII.

From the Duke du Maine to the same.

August 3, 1714.

I Thank you, kind Mamma, for what the King has just done for me: He has been obeyed without any Contradiction. Now my Rank is fixed, thanks to his Kindness and yours. I wish the Precautions his Majesty has taken in Favour of me may prove needless. The Count *de Toulouse* receives this Increase of Glory and Honour with a Fortitude and a Kind of Insensibility that render him very worthy of it.

LETTER CCLIX.

*To Madam de Vantadour.**Sept. 29, 1714.*

THE King orders me to acquaint you, Madam, that he has received your Letter with Pleasure: He gives you a strong Proof of Confidence in committing to your Care the most valuable Thing that He and *France* have to bestow. You'll say that you must pay dear for it: I agree with you in this; you must bid adieu to Repose, and comfort yourself with the fine Side of the Employment. Be not surprized at my being so seldom in Company: I hide myself as much as I can, ashamed of living so long: I am weary of shewing a Face wither'd by old Age, which should no longer be seen. My great Experience induces me to think it needless to be in haste to make Children learn any thing that goes in the least against the grain; and since you absolutely insist upon my giving you some Advice, I will do it, provided you keep it secret. As we can never have too much Reason and Virtue, so I think you cannot begin too early with him on these Heads. I would have the * young Prince trained up by

* The present King of *France*.

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flow Degrees to Secrecy; accustom him never to tell again what he has been entrusted with; instil into him Sentiments of Humanity; let him never see any Examples of the least Deceit; let him be fair and candid at Play, and make him take Delight in obliging and doing Service. This is sufficient, my dear Duchess.

LETTER CCLX.

From the Cardinal de Rohan to Madam de Maintenon.

Dec. 23, 1714.

FATHER *Maffillon* has acquitted himself of the Commission, Madam, but has found the Cardinal *de Noailles* more difficult about executing than projecting; nevertheless, he still hopes. For my part, who desire more than any Man a good Accommodation, I have been taught by cruel Experience not to give myself up to Hopes: However, as it luckily happens on this Occasion, Hope makes no Alteration in the Course that has been taken.

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LETTER CCLXI.

*From the same to the same.**Paris, Dec. 30, 1714.*

I Would very dearly purchase, Madam, the Pleasure of sending you the News of a Turn in the Cardinal *de Noailles*; but, unhappily, we are not yet arrived at that. Father *Massillon* has seen him again, and I have seen Father *Massillon* since. I have delivered to him the Instrument of Acceptation; he approved of it, and promised to present it to *M. de Noailles*: He shewed me another which he had drawn up; but the Bishops of *Meaux* and *Blois* made some Objections to it. I send you Copies of both: You know that they imply such an Authentic Act on the Part of his Holiness, as may make the Cardinal *de Noailles* easy in regard to his Fears and Scruples: 'Tis the first Thing that *M. Amelot* is to manage at *Rome*.

LETTER CCLXII.

*From the same to the same.**Saturday, 1715.*

I Have the honour to send you, Madam, the Draught of a Declaration that is to precede the calling of a Council of the National Clergy:

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It was not agreed upon till last Night. The first President of the Parliament, and the Attorney General are sent for, in order to its being communicated to them. This Step is become absolutely necessary, seeing the Court of *Rome* does not help us out: This is setting in earnest about a Work that grieves me excessively, and may carry us to Extremities, which I cannot think of, without great Uneasiness. God send us Help!

LETTER CCLXIII.

From the same to the same.

March 20, 1715.

IT is very true, Madam, that you have often been of Service in discoursing with Men: I experience it in the Correspondence you permit me to hold with you: Your last Letters have given me great Comfort, fresh Vigour, and an Encrease of Zeal; at this very Instant I feel more than ever, a Readiness to do any Thing to serve Religion, the King, and the State. As I will take no Step without acquainting you with it, I send you the Memorial I intend to present to the King.

N 2

Memorial

Memorial for the King.

Though my Confidence in your Majesty's Goodness, equals my Respect for your sacred Person, I feel an extreme Timidity, when I am to ask any Thing for myself. My Attachment to you, Sire, is so perfect, that there is not any thing I would not sacrifice to the Fear of displeasing you; and though my Wants are real, and the Opportunity of gratifying them singular, by the Vacancy of regular Abbeyes, I had rather renounce all Hopes, than expose myself to make a Petition that might be disagreeable to you. Your Majesty perhaps wonders to hear me talk of Wants; and yet nothing is more true. I have laid open my Circumstances to Father le Tellier; he knows what those Wants are, and what has been the Cause of them: He is able to give your Majesty an Account of them. When informed of the State of my Affairs, you'll give what Orders you think convenient; and you may be certain of such Submission on my Part, as will not suffer me to harbour the least Regret, or wish contrary to your Will and Pleasure.

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LETTER CCLXIV.

From the same to the same.

March 24, 1715.

THE Bishop of *Meaux*, by all Appearances, will soon be made a Cardinal. May he not receive some Marks of the King's Benevolence, which, by enabling him to support his new Dignity, may at the same Time keep his Enemies in Awe? I send you the Memorial which I have delivered to the *Nuntio*: It will shew you, Madam, that in preserving the Respect due to the Holy See, and in studying the Good of the Church, I strenuously maintain our Liberties; that I speak as boldly in favour of the Cardinal *de Noailles* as he himself could do; and that in proposing to hold a Council, without admitting to it any Legates from the Pope, we still keep the Door open to those who have departed from us. To this Letter I subjoin a Piece containing the Preliminaries, which *M. Thiberge* has proposed to us, in the Name of the Cardinal *de Noailles*, and our Answer thereto. You'll perceive that Reason and Justice are on our Side, and that the other Party still entertain Distrusts and Prejudices that do us a great deal of Harm.

LETTER CCLXV.

To the Duchefs of Vantadour.

June 16, 1715.

ANY one that should fee your Letter, would rather admire the Receiver than the Giver of Advice: It is more common to know how to discourse, than to receive with Calmness and Humility what is said to us, as you do, especially, Madam, being above me in Rank. But I have one Thing more to tell you: If you follow my Notions, your Method of Education will not be conspicuous; all the Merit will be for future Times, and nothing of it be apparent for the present. The late Dauphin, at five or six Years old, understood a thousand *Latin* Words, and not one when he became his own Master. But there's enough on this Head. Adieu, my dear Duchefs; let us think of our Salvation, and be always prepared for our Departure: Death comes at any Age. We have lost twelve little Girls at St. Cyr: They die like Angels, and go to form our Community in Heaven. May God lead thither that of *Marli*!

L E T.

LETTER CCLXVI.

To the Marchioness

St. Cyr, Sept. 3, 1715-

WHAT a Loss have we met with! Nothing now remains but to submit to Providence. The King has died the Death of the Righteous, and, as the wise Man says, full of Days. I shall not long survive him: What Pleasure can I from henceforth find in this World? and how can I behold the Prospect of the Calamities that threaten the Kingdom? My Heart longs to meet in Heaven that noble and pure Soul, with which it has been so long occupied and satisfied; for I should look upon it as a great Crime in me, to hesitate a Moment whether God has been merciful to him. Let us think of following him: Happy, if we perform that terrible Passage with a Part only of his Fortitude. I beg you would get seventy three Masses said at the Church of the Holy Ghost.

LETTER CCLXVII.

To the same.

Sept. 5, 1715.

On the Evening of our Return from *Marl.*, the King was so weak, it was with Difficulty he crept from his Closet to his praying-Desk. Two Days after he appeared to me so far spent, that I no longer doubted of his Death: I talked to him of God; he readily listened to me, and put me several times upon the same Topic. The 23d, I entertained some Hopes; he eat and slept; and the next Day dispatched some Business with *M. Voisin*. But whether Application had fatigued him, or his Distemper was come to a Crisis, he fainted away. I was greatly alarmed at it, but kept myself in as good Decorum as possible: When recovered from his fainting, I proposed to him to receive the Sacraments; to which he answered, 'Tis rather too soon, I find myself 'well enough.' I replied to him, that at all times it was a wise Precaution; that we could never be too early in beseeching God to pardon our Offences. Putting him in mind of some of his Actions, which I had been Eye-Witness of, he said to me, 'You, do me a Piece of Service,

I

' I thank you for it.' He confessed himself ; and
 I used my utmost Endeavours to put on that
 Fortitude I so much admired in him : My chief
 Care was to refrain from weeping ; and as often
 as I felt the Tears ready to drop, I withdrew
 for a Moment. He called for his Casket, I
 brought it to him, and he searched it before
 me ; finding some Lists of the Journeys to
Marli, ' These, said he, are Papers of very little
 ' Consequence ; no bad Use can be made of
 ' them ;' then taking up another Paper, he
 added, ' Let us burn this, it might occasion
 ' great Hatred and Strife between those two
 ' Ministers.' He found a Chaplet, which he
 gave me, saying, ' Carry it about you, not as
 ' a Relique, but to keep me always in Re-
 ' membrance.' The Cardinal *de Roban* gave
 him the Viaticum ; after which, he said, ' I
 ' have lived a great many Years, but very few
 ' of them have been spent in God's Service.'
 He sent for the Royal Family, and said to them,
 ' I recommend Peace and Unity to you.' The
 25th, though he had no Fever, he was ex-
 cessively thirsty : I gave him Drink three times.
M. Fagon no longer doubted that the Gangrene
 was got into his Leg ; he whispered me that it
 had penetrated to the Bone, and that there were
 no more Hopes : I passed the Night by his Bed-

side, and talked with him about his spiritual Concerns: He told me that he had but three Things to reproach himself with, and that God's Mercies were still greater than his Sins. The next Day *Mareschal* made two Incisions with a Lancet; the King felt nothing, but fainted away. The Physicians seeing him so resolute and unconcerned, consulted about cutting off his Leg; *M. Fagon* would not propose it to him; I took upon me to do so; upon which he said to them, 'Do you think to save my Life by it?' *Mareschal* answered, that there was but little Probability of it: 'If so, said the King, it is needless to put me to any Pain.' After which, turning to the other Side, where the Marshal *de Villeroy* stood, he reached out his Hand to him, and said, 'Adieu my Friend, we must part.' The Cardinal *de Rohan* and Father *Le Tellier* came in; he had a long Conference with them; I withdrew to give free Vent to my Tears, and I heard only these Words upon entering the Room again, 'You'll answer for it before God.' The 27th, he bid the Princes draw near him: He recommended the Dauphin to the Duke of *Orleans*, and said to the Duke *du Maine*, 'Take Care of his Education; be as strongly attached to him as you have been to me.' He then desired the Duke of *Bourbon*

and

and the Prince of *Conti* not to imitate their Fathers. The Dauphin having drawn near, he gave him his Blessing, and said to him, 'My Son, you are going to be a great King; be always a good Christian; don't follow my Example in regard to War; endeavour to live in Peace with your Neighbours: Render to God what you owe to him; follow always the most moderate Counsels; endeavour to reduce the Taxes, and do that which I unhappily have not been able to do.' The Dauphin having withdrawn, he ordered him to be called in again, embraced him with Tears in his Eyes, and added, 'Take notice, my Son, of what I have been saying to you, as my last Precepts; and let these Counsels sink deep into your Mind. Remember that Kings die like other Men.' He bid me adieu three times: The first time, he assured me, that he regretted nothing but parting from me; but, added he, with a Sigh, we shall soon meet again: I entreated him to turn his Thoughts towards God only. The second time he asked my Pardon for not having lived with me so well as he ought, and for not having made me happy; but that he had always loved and esteemed me. He desired me to take notice whether the Attendants did not listen: However, added he, 'no-body

' body will ever be surprized that I give way to
 ' Tenderness with you.' At the third Adieu, he
 said to me, ' What will become of you?
 ' you are left destitute.' I exhorted him to
 mind nothing but God; but reflecting after-
 wards, that I could not tell how the Princes
 might treat me, I desired him to recommend
 me to the Duke of Orleans. He accordingly
 called the Duke, and said to him, ' My Nephew,
 ' I recommend Madam de Maintenon to your
 ' Care: You know what Esteem and Regard
 ' I have always had for her; she never gave me
 ' any but good Counsels, and I repent my not
 ' having always followed them: She has been
 ' useful to me in all Respects, and chiefly in
 ' turning me to God, and labouring for my
 ' Salvation. Grant her whatever she may ask
 ' you, whether it be for herself, or for her Re-
 ' lations and Friends; she'll not make an Abuse
 ' of it: Let her apply directly to yourself.' The
 30th, he said to me, ' You must needs have a
 ' great deal of Courage to be always present at
 ' such a Spectacle.' When I found he had
 lost all Sense, and that I could be of no farther
 Service to him, being no longer able to stifle
 my Grief, I resolved to retire to this Place;
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 the Road, that I might not be known, I de-
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fired the Marshal *Killeroy* to lend me his Coach, and told him at parting, that my Affliction was pungent, yet calm; that the King's Death was a Christian Death, that I had never begg'd any Thing of God but his eternal Happiness, and that I was going to shut myself up with my Children. At my Arrival I found the Community assembled to receive me, and at the Sight of the young Ladies I could not refrain from Tears: Behold how many fatherless Children are here, said I to the Archbishop of *Rouen* and the Bishop of *Chartres*, who would absolutely wait upon me to my Chamber! From all that I have been relating to you * * * * *
The rest is wanting.

LETTER CCLXVIII.

To the same.

St. Cyr, Sept. 7. 1715.

* * * * *
 * * * * * The Prince told me, as he entered my Apartment, that he was come to give me Assurances of all the Regard I could desire. I was going to return him Thanks, but he interrupted me, saying, that he did nothing but his Duty, and that I knew what had

* The Duke of *Orleans*, Regent of the Kingdom.
 been

been prescribed to him. I answered him, that I perceived with extreme Pleasure, by the Visit he made me, the Respect he preserved for the late King. 'That Reason, replied he, 'would not let me fail to pay you a Visit; besides, 'which, I pay it on account of the Esteem I 'have for you; and I have taken Measures for, 'conserving to you what the King allowed you 'out of the Coffer.' I made answer, that I did not desire such a Sum, and that it was too much, considering what a Condition the Finances were in. 'It is a Trifle, replied he; it 'is true, however, that the Finances are extremely disordered.' I told him I would employ that Sum in good Works, and getting Prayers said for him. 'I have great need of 'them, answered he, I begin to feel the Burthen that is laid on me.' I assured him that he would find it heavier hereafter. 'I have, said he, no other Object in View than to deliver up to the young King his Kingdom in a better Condition than I have received it, and after surrendering him the regal Authority, enjoy the Tranquility, and Honour I shall have acquired.' This Design, said I, is much worthier of yourself, than that of reigning, which some People charge you with. 'Had I the Misfortune to lose the young King, replied

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' he, could I reign in Peace? Should I not be engaged in a War with *Spain*? ' No, said I to him, I will never believe all the Reports that are spread to your Prejudice: My long Experience has made me acquainted with the Malice of Mankind: I have nothing else to do now but confine myself within the Obligation of the Benefaction which you give me Assurances of * * * * I engage upon Honour to break off all Correspondence with *Spain*. I shall lay aside all Thoughts of public Affairs, and content myself with praying for the Prosperity of *France*. He made me again all Sorts of Proteftations of his Kindness to me and to St. *Cyr*, and desired that I would always apply directly to himself. Then he called for the Ladies of the Community, and thus addressed them; ' Ladies, I have sent for you, to assure you of the Protection you'll always meet with from me: The King recommended you to me, and that is sufficient: I am no Stranger to the Merit of a House so useful to all the Noblesse: You may address yourselves to me whenever you see occasion: I am come to assure you of it in Person, and to commend myself to your Prayers, that God may give me Strength to bear the terrible Burthen laid on me.' *Madame* came also to visit me towards Evening, and gave me notice of the intended Visits of the Duchefs of *Berry*, and the Duchefs of *Orleans*, for which I sent them my
 Thanks,

Thanks, with a Request not to come, that I might indulge my Grief in Solitude.

LETTER CCLXIX.

To the Rector of Maintenon.

NONE but God can comfort us for what he has deprived us of. I am no longer to be depended upon; I can be of no farther Service. I shall no more stir out of St. Cyr. Pray to God to bless my Retirement, which is to be a Preparation for Death.

LETTER CCLXX.

To the Princess des Ursins.

WE must humble ourselves, Madam, under the mighty Hand that has smitten us. I heartily wish that your Situation was as happy as mine. I have seen the King die like a Saint and a Hero. I have quitted the World, for which I had no Relish: I am in the most agreeable Retirement, and in all Places shall ever be your's, &c.

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* A House and Garden in Paris, maintained by the Government, where lectures are made given in Botany, Anatomy, &c.

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Thanks, with a Request to come, that I might indulge my Grief in Solitude.

LETTER CCLXXI.

To M. Fagon.

Sept. 18, 1715.

I HAVE been told, Sir, that you have retired to the * King's Garden: Nothing is more suitable; I hope you'll find Rest there. I conjure you to live from henceforth only for yourself, and to enjoy the Company of the honestest Man, whom you find in your Son. My Retreat is very pleasant: I have seen the King die like a Saint, which is the Thing I had always wished for. I have forsaken the World, which, you know, I did not love. My Life will be short: I don't think I am to be pitied. It is honourable to have a King to mourn for.

LETTER CCLXXII.

To M. d'Aubigné, Archbishop of Rouen.

MY Lord, I am apprehensive of Pride when I recollect all the Blessings God has bestowed on me; and I dread Ingratitude, in not acknowledging, with Thousands of Thanks, the Hand that supports me, and renders me almost insensible of my Loss and of my Fall. Don't write

* A House and Garden in Paris, maintained by the Government, where Lectures are made gratis in Botany, Anatomy, &c.

to

to me without dropping in some Exhortation :
That's your Province, and 'tis my Duty to give
you an attentive Hearing.

L E T T E R CCLXXIII.

To Madam de Caylus.

Sept. 23, 1715.

THERE is always something to be got by
removing : I have amassed more Riches
than I thought myself Mistress of. You'll
receive a black Bag, in which some of the Things
may be acceptable to your Children : I have
added to it two little Trunks which you'll set a
great Value on. As I always tack a little Avarice
to my Liberalities, make me a Present of a
Silver Bell, to lie upon my Table. However
I may have been accusom'd to good Attendance,
I never was so expeditiously served as I am here;
and yet I foresee the Bell will be useful to me.
I am in a delightful Retreat.

L E T T E R CCLXXIV.

To the same.

Octob. 7, 1715.

COME and see me, but come without At-
tendants and without Noise. It is very
happy for me that I can end my Days in so
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charming a Retreat. I rise at Six, go Mass at Seven, and sometimes assist at the Exercises and at the Recreations of the Ladies, whom I have desired to give me Notice when they shall perceive me beginning to dote. It must be confessed, that it is very honourable to live long: It is now thought no less than an Elogium on me to say, *She yet reasons well; She still writes with a steady Hand.* This is great Praise; enough, indeed, to encourage Self-love!

LETTER CCLXXV.

To the same.

Nov. 10, 1715.

I AM very sorry your Son is not devout; a very honest Man is not far removed from God; he need only take him for the Object and the End of all his Actions; it is not at all necessary to be for ever at Church. For the rest, I think you extremely happy in having such good Company in the Person of a Son that loves you tenderly. I have been told you were very melancholy: Shake it off, my dear Niece; Sorrow is neither good for this World, nor for the next. I have seen the Duke *de Noailles*, and I have desired him, and very sincerely too, not be in haste to pay me another Visit; for Visits do me much Harm, in putting me in mind of
what

what I am endeavouring to forget : They bring back to me all the Bitterness of the Court. Our Cardinal, who is no longer ours, is no more to be pitied than we. Adieu.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

To the same.

Decemb. 5, 1715.

I Have seen the Marshal *de Villeroy*. He is more dejected than ever, and much to be pitied, having nothing that can afford him Comfort: God will, perhaps, touch his Heart by Crosses and Misfortunes. The Small-pox is rife here; I shall be as solitary as I desire. I often pretend Business, in order to shut myself up; I write, I weep, I make up Pacquets, and seek Occupation. I had the Courage some Days ago to look again at the Reliques which the King carried about him: Your Attachment to his Person and your Piety induce me to believe, that you will not be sorry to have some of those Reliques.

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LETTER CCLXXVII.

To the same.

Jan. 1, 1716.

A Good Day and a happy New Year to you, my dear Niece: I wish you an Encrease of Piety, Understanding, and Health, which I take to be the greatest Blessings. I am in Fear for the Duke *du Maine*; his great Demerit is to have been too much beloved by the King. I could more easily bear the Ingratitude of some and the Forgetfulness of others, than the Friendship which certain Folks express; and that Prince redoubles his for me; so that, by interesting myself in the Concerns of a certain Number of Persons, I find myself always ready to share in their Afflictions without partaking their Pleasures. The Archbishop of *Rouen* has given me an Account of his Troubles: They daily insult him, by telling him, that we must no longer build upon what was done by the King. Yet I defy them all to take a wiser Step. God be praised!

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L E T T E R CCLXXVIII.

*From Mademoiselle d'Aumale to Madam
de Maintenon.*

Jan. 14, 1716.

THE Duke du Maine is pushed to Extremities : You know what his Crime is : They counterfeit an Apprehension of some desperate Step. M. d'Argenson is recompensed. I tell you again, it would be right to spend your leisure Hours in writing your Life : It will be read with Pleasure, and be very edifying : A Conscience, so tender as your's, ought to look upon it as a Duty to prevent the Falsities which Historians, taking their Information from your Enemies, will throw out concerning you ; for the purest Virtue is no Security against Calumny and Credulity. 'Tis the Opinion of the Archbishop ; 'tis the Opinion of the Marshal ; 'tis mine, and consequently the Voice of the most faithful Attachment.

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L E T T E R CCLXXIX.

*To Mademoiselle d'Aumale.**Jan. 18, 1716.*

I Would willingly glorify God, by making known all that he has done for me, but it's impossible: I have burnt all the Materials, and am now, perhaps happily, incapable of proving any thing. My Life abounding with Effects of Providence, would indeed be agreeable to those that love God, but totally insipid to such as would expect Intrigues and publick Events in it, and then find themselves disappointed. Such a Life is not made for this Age: Would it be believed, that in the Time of Splendor and Credit I never thought of myself, and was in high Favour only for the Good of others: That when I thought my self obliged to it, I have given Counsel against a Friend, and begg'd a Favour for an Enemy? And if the World would believe it, what Amusement could they, that love Books of Entertainment only, find in perusing such Things? I look upon my Life as a Miracle, when I reflect, that I was born impatient, and that the King never percieved it, though I often found myself wound up to the highest Pitch and ready to quit all: I was born of an open, ingenuous Disposition, and have been for ever obliged to dissemble. During
my

my first Years of Favour, I was excessively nettled when the King did not grant me all that I asked him for my Relations; my Custom was to weep when alone; as soon as the King entered the Chamber my Countenance cleared up, and he thought me very well pleased. My Design, from the Beginning, was to rescue him out of the Hands of Women, and then give him to God. It would have been impossible to have succeeded in this without extreme Complaisance. God alone knows all I went through; I was at Court, in order to sanctify the King, and to suffer, when he ran counter to me. Judge then, whether the perusal of all these Things would prove an Amusement: I shall not write my Life, since I ought not to conceal the Workings of God, and (once more I repeat it) I will not tell every thing.

LETTER CCLXXX.

To Madam de Caylus.

Feb. 1, 1716.

WHAT a Misfortune, my dear Niece, is it to be concerned for the public Good! But does Retirement make change in us? The Marshal *de Villeroy* has wrote to me in a Stile more tragic than that of *Racine*, nay, more than that of *Longe-Pierre*. I hope my Pension will be paid;

paid, however, be not uneasy about me: *Maintenon* is sufficient to keep me from starving. So then, *Madam de Mailly* is reduced to Beggary: God be praised! I say it cordially, as devout Folks are used to do, but not with the same Unconcern. The little Phrase of *Dangeau* has pleased me. I have no other Pleasure now, than that of keeping up a Correspondence with those that loved the King: It costs me some Tears, but they are much more pleasant than to hear of the Ingratitude of Courtiers. Adieu, my dear Niece; live betimes like an old Woman as I have done, and you'll live as long as me.

LETTER CCLXXXI.

To the same.

March, 1716.

THE Archbishop of *Rouen* is afflicted like *Job*, in Body and Mind, on account of the State of Religion: He is insulted and reviled by the Party. All the Prelates that stand up for the good Cause, are apprehensive that the Cardinal *de Rohan* will desert them. I shall pity *Mademoiselle de*——, if she loses her Mother; but I cannot pity those who die. Don't increase your Expences; 'tis nothing but Vanity that makes us wish for so many Things: Even plenty of

O

Necessaries

Necessaries holds within a narrow Compass. Get me a black Robe ; let it be made like a Sack ; I can bear neither Plaits nor Girdle, I'm so fell away. Within this Fortnight I am grown older by fifteen Years ; and yet M. *Dangeau* has wrote me four Words in a very gallant Strain. It was a great while since I had heard any thing about my fine Eyes. I think myself happy in their being good enough to write to you so frequently.

LETTER CCLXXXII.

To the same.

Sept. 1716.

YESTERDAY was not spent so agreeably between Madam *Dangeau* and I, as the preceding Day : She entered into a long Ecclaircissement about Jansenism ; according to her there is no such Thing as Jansenism ; 'tis only a Pretext made use of to persecute very honest People, whose Morals are irreproachable : The Contrast between the Cardinals *de Rohan* and *Noailles* was not forgot : All those Men, whom we call the sound Party, were willing to please the King for their own Interest, &c. These are the Points that were amply and frankly discussed on both Sides. Don't think this Dispute has occasioned the least Coldness between us : I

answered

answered her with great Calmness; and she expressed so much Tenderness for me, that it was impossible not to be affected with it. I cannot conceive how she should have so great an Affection and Friendship for a Person like me, who can no longer excite any Passion, except those of Pity, Disgust and Sorrow. You are warmer than I on the Article of Jansenism; but I pardon you, for we ought to suffer every one to have his own Way of thinking: It is true, that Uniformity in Sentiments contributes much to increase Friendship; but this is not in our Power.

LETTER CCLXXXIII.

To the same.

Nov. 4, 1716.

YOU will hardly believe that I am a Sufferer by the Chamber of Justice; yet it is true, for I am plagued with a Multitude of Petitioners, all begging Recommendations to the Duke de Noailles: I am so well persuaded that all my Requests would be politely heard, and neglected with Indifference, that I give every body a Denial. The Duke du Maine avers, that that * *Englishman* has neither Honour, Religion,

* *Mr. Law.*

nor Faith; that his Project was rejected by the Parliament of *Scotland*. That Man and *Dubois* are going to ruin *France*. Alas! The King was thinking, a Month before he died, of nothing but easing the People, and enriching the State.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.

To the same.

Nov. 1716.

THE Bishop of * *Frejus* has paid me a Visit: The Affairs now on the Carpet are of so different a Nature from those of former Times, that I cannot say our Conversation was pleasant; however, it is agreeable to converse with him. The Stories I hear make me so melancholy, that I could even return to *America*, did not my Age forbid it. How many extraordinary Things have I seen! The Duchess of *Burgundy* obtained every thing by her Tears, and by such Ways as would have occasioned the Fall of any other. *Madam de Montespan* had six Mice harnessed to a little Coach of Filligrane, and suffered them to bite her fine Hands: She kept Pigs and Goats under painted and gilt Cielings: The King was wont to shew her to his Ministers as a Child; yet she knew the Secrets of State, and gave

* Afterwards Cardinal de *Fleury*.

Counsel,

Counsel, sometimes good, sometimes bad, according as her Passions guided her. Adieu; you have great Reason to expect an irreconcilable Hatred from the Party: They know what they have lost in losing you. I fancy the Papers found upon Father *Quésnel* are in the Hands of the Jesuits: It was from them that the King received them by a few Sheets at a Time: I spent many Evenings in perusing them.

LETTER CCLXXXV.

To the same.

May 14, 1717.

I SHALL always be very cheerful; that is what my Heart answers you: But Reason tells you, that far from multiplying your Visits, you ought to forbear them to me, who should now be forgotten, and made to forget every thing that does not suit me. I have thought more than once of the Removal of your Son the Chevalier. You know it is my Misfortune to be no Stranger to the Sensations of a Mother: You have Mortifications: I am much afraid the Remainder of our Lives will not prove more comfortable. We pay indeed for the Pleasures and Giddiness of Youth. I find, in reviewing my Life, that since the Age of thirty-two, which was the Beginning of my Fortune, I have not

been a Moment without some Uneasiness, and that my Afflictions have always been upon the Increase. Adieu; I don't mind *Telemachus*. Next *Wednesday* we'll talk of the Czar, who seems to me to be a great Man, ever since he has inquir'd after my Health.

LETTER CCLXXXVI.

To the Marchioness de——.

May 12, 1717.

I Plainly discern the Marshal *de Villeroy's* Character, in the Application he has made to the Duke of *Orleans* without letting you know any thing of it: He did the same for me at the Death of the Queen Mother: He begg'd of the King a Pension, though he had scarcely ever spoke to me. He has just wrote to me in a very tragic Stile on the Affairs of the Times. I should be glad to be the third Person in Company, when you are weeping with *Madam de Chevreuse*: Her Tears are very sincere, and she has great Reason to mourn. How will *M. de Dangeau*, who finds fault with nothing, get clear of the present State of the World? God has highly favour'd you in giving you a Relish for Solitude; for you are very fit for the World, I mean the World that I was formerly acquainted with. 'Tis not the only Blessing you have

have received from him, and I don't know any Body that owes him so many Acknowledgments. God grant that the Representation of *Athaliah* may produce some Conversions! I think it is the finest Piece I ever saw. I am surprized that the Cardinal *de Noailles* does not oppose its being acted by Comedians: You may well suppose that this is very ill relished at *St. Cyr*.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

To *Madam de Caylus*.

June 11, 1717

I HAVE sent to inquire about your Health; and this Moment a Messenger acquaints me, that the Czar intends to be here in the Afternoon, if I have no Objection to it. I did not dare to answer in the Negative; and I will wait for him on my Bed: I know not whether we ought to receive him with Ceremony, nor whether he is for seeing the whole House. * * *

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He arrived at seven in the Evening; he sat down by my Bed's-Side, and asked me by an Interpreter whether I was sick? I said that I was; he asked what my Ailment might be; and I answered, great Age and a pretty weak Constitution. He knew not what to reply, and his In-

terpreter seemed not to understand me. His Visit was very short; he caused the Curtain to be open'd at the Bed's-Feet, in order to have a Peep at me: You may well judge that it must have given him a great deal of Satisfaction.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

To the same.

Nov. 1717.

I Should be very sorry to be obliged to blot the Cardinal de Rohan out of the List of the Persons I esteem: It is already a very short one. I shall be much surprized, if the * Cardinal's Acceptance contents the Pope. 'Tis pity I should improve my Mind so late! I should have spared myself great Trouble, had I known every thing that Kings and Popes can do. Methinks it is dangerous to remain where we are; temporizing will not do the Business: What has been done would redound to the Credit of our Bishops, if they made an End of the Work; and will be construed as Weakness, if they don't finish it. 'Tis my Opinion; perhaps the Opinion of a Woman.

* Cardinal Noailles, who for a long Time opposed the Constitution *Unigenitus*.

LET-

LETTER CCLXXXIX.

*To the same.**March 10, 1718.*

I AM extremely ashamed that I have not here the Contract of my Grand Father: I must needs have left it among the Writings of my Estate of *Maintenon*. It is ridiculous in me to have always lived in that Carelessness about Things that personally concern me. The Superior of Saint *Cyr*, who is warmer than I on this Head, has brought me to the Proofs exhibited for my Brother. They are as resplendent as the Sun; but I look upon them as a Work of Flattery made for a Person in high Favour. I have extracted nothing from it, but the Date of my Grand Father's Contract, which is as follows. 'Marriage Contract between *Theodore Aggripa d'Aubigné*, Esquire, Lord of *Landes*, ' *Guillemer*, and *Chaillou*, Equerry to the King ' of *Navarre*, and Gentleman in ordinary of his ' Bed Chamber, Son of *John d'Aubigné*, Lord ' of *Rie*, and of Dame *Catherine de l'Eslang*, ' with Damoiselle *Susanna de Lezay*, Daughter ' of the Noble and Puissant Lord *Ambrose de ' Lezay*, and of Damoiselle *Renée de Vivonne*. Never had I so much Trouble about my Noblesse,

as in copying all this. This Contract is of the
6th June 1583, received by *Vase* Notary &c.

LETTER CCXC.

To the Marchioness de _____

I Never doubted of the Success of this Affair, though my † Niece is very young. It would have been difficult for M. d'Armagnac to have found more Riches and Support. The Survivorship, the Brevet of Retainer, the immense Dowry, all put together, are rare Things in these Days. The Duke of Orleans has done more than the King himself would have done: At least I durst not have carried my Hopes so high. My Timidity has spoiled many Things, and my Discretion has often been the Cause of my doing Service by Halves. Had I known the full Extent of my Power, I might, perhaps, have made an Abuse of it; and had the King listened to me less, I should, perhaps, have been more important. The Bishop of Frejus has wrote me a congratulatory Letter, which does him still more Honour than it gives me Pleasure. I conceive how joyful the Cardinal must be: All this

† Mademoiselle de Noailles, Daughter of the Duke de Noailles, and of Mademoiselle de Aubigné; married Prince Charles of Lorraine, Son of M. de Armagnac: She was not yet thirteen Years-old.

Affair

Affair is his Work. The Abbé *de Lorraine* is not the Man he wants. Formerly they thought so. In our Days the Houses of the Grandees are like those of Sovereign Princes. I have seen the Birth of all these Contradictions.

LETTER CCXCI.

To the same.

SO then, neither Forms of Justice nor Ties of Blood are any longer regarded! The late King was mistaken, then, in fancying Men were less wicked than they are! It was in order to prevent all that they are now doing against the Duke *du Maine* and the Count of *Toulouze*, that he matched their Sisters with the * three Branches. He thought by that to secure their Rank, and attach them for ever to the Tree of the *Bourbons*. What will the Duchesses of *Berry* do? There would be no room to hesitate, if she was willing to acquire Glory. To say that the Parliament acts in this Case only through Complaisance or Fear, is grossly imposing upon the whole World. The Right of Succession is too distant a Right; it was granted only in order the better to secure the Right of the legitimate Princes. In short, that Petition is scandalous. The Memorial of our Princes is very energetic:

* *Orléans, Condé, and Conti.*

I don't see what Answer can be made to it; but ought I not to recollect, that now-a-days nothing is done according to the Rules of Reason and Justice? Blessed be God! His will be done.

LETTER CXXII.

To the Marchioness de 1718.

THEY still dwell upon Father *le Tellier*, as if every thing he did was a Crime. You know I never liked him; yet I am really concerned to see them lay Things to his Charge in which he never had any hand. The ill-inclined make use of his Name, in order to render the sound Doctrine odious, and vilify all the Measures that have been taken to support it. The Resolutions of the Assembly were very just. Every thing that weakens or invalidates them, tends to Schism and Rebellion. You know how many Persons I have in that Party that are dear to me; judge then what a Mortification it would be to protect what I look upon as a great Error.

* The Cardinal de Noailles, as we infer from the
 Copy sent from other Letters.

T E T

LETTER CCXIII.

To the same.

WHAT you tell me concerning the Marshal *d'Uxelles* does not surprize me; but the Conduct of the * *C. de N.* gives me a great deal of Uneasiness. That fixed Point, which he so often promised me, does not agree with his irresolute Temper. But why did he deceive me? After having tried every Expedient, he will perhaps return at last of his own accord to the only one that can restore Peace to the State and to the Church. We have seen one another again with all the Demonstrations of our former Friendship, without stifling in our Hearts the Complaints we ow'd each other for Interruption's Sake. I like M. *de Villars* exceedingly, for not concerning himself with these Iniquities; I could only wish that he did through Piety what he does out of Prudence. I never was more sensible of the Decay of my Senses: It gives me no uneasiness. What does it signify, whether all Things be in order or Confusion, when we have not above two Days to live?

* The Cardinal *de Noailles*, as we infer from the Context and from other Letters.

L E T-

LETTER CCXCIV.

To the same.

I AM very sorry to have no good News to tell you of *Mademoiselle de Bassigny*: She is still in the same Condition: I very heartily commiserate it, and am concerned at all your Troubles. Offer them up to God, my dear Marchioness: He alone can make us amends for them, and at our Years it is Time to be sensible of the Vanity and Emptiness of human Things. *M. de Villeroy* would do better to quit a * Country which he is not made for: He is too virtuous for it. He is much grieved, but has not Resolution to break loose, and comforts himself in his present Disgrace by the Remembrance of his past Credit. For my Part, I cannot in my whole Life recollect any Scenes of Pleasure so exquisite as my present Afflictions are bitter; and all my Consolation centers in the Expectation of that last Hour, which will soon come and put a Period to all my Joys and all my Sorrows.

* Meaning the Court.

LET-

LETTER CCXCV.

To the same.

ALL these Disorders rack me, and if God does not make me less concerned at them, I shall not die of old Age. The Cardinal *de Rohan* has deceived me more than all the rest: I answered for him to the late King, but he has doubtless forgot upon what Conditions. The *Duchess du Maine* writes to me in a dismal Strain that excites Compassion: I receive no Intelligence from the Count of *Toulouse*. However uneasy I may be, I am very glad of that prudent Conduct. *M. de Tefse* has made me a Visit. It is very melancholy to discourse with such Men as are fully sensible of their Misery, and want Fortitude to extricate themselves! I shall write no more to you, for the Dead don't write, and I reckon myself amongst them. The Breath of Life is almost gone. It is high Time to die. Why should I stay any longer in this World? I have nothing to do, and 'tis Business only that makes us fond of staying in it.

LETTER

LETTER CCXCVI.

To the same.

THE Duke du Maine's Misfortune grieves me more than it surprizes me. I am sure he is innocent. God will avenge him. What strange Things was I born to see! The late King foresaw Part of them, and I made him easy about the rest. He reckoned when he died, that his People would at last enjoy the Tranquility which his Labours had procured them. I am ashamed offending my Receipt to the Treasury: I could wish to be under no Obligation to C——b——l. 'Tis not his Esteem for me, 'tis my great Age that screens me from his Persecution and his Attempts. Would he were but sensible of all he owes me! I pity the poor Cardinal, and still more in his Triumph than in his Disgrace. There's no Religion left: How then do you expect any Justice? I am gone to Bed, and hope never to rise out of it. What should I do in this World? I have seen in it horrible Things enough: The Measure of Iniquity is filled up.

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L E T T E R CCXCVII.

To the same.

IF the * Archbishop of *Rheims* had less Zeal and Steadiness, he would doubtless be happier. Let us thank God there are yet Men in his Church, who cannot be brought to bend the Knee to the Grandees of the Earth. This Schism cuts me to the Heart. What Pains did not the late King take to make Peace in the Church! All the Measures they are now taking will plunge the Kingdom into the greatest Calamities. They are rushing upon Destruction; they'll perceive it, and endeavour to retreat, but they will not be able to do it; as they are not terrified on the Edge of the Precipice, it won't be in their Power to get out, when once fallen into it. The violent Conduct of Father *Le*

* *Mailly*, Archbishop of *Arles*, and afterwards of *Rheims*; a great Stickler for the sound Doctrine, Brother of the Marquess *de Nesle*, and of the Count *de Maille*, who had married *Mademoiselle de St. Hermine*, Niece, *a la mode of Brittany*, of *Madam de Maintenon*, who had obtained him the See of *Rheims*. He had signed two Pieces, which the Parliament of *Paris* ordered to be burnt by the Hand of the common Hangman. *Mailly* thanked God for it by a solemn *Te Deum*. God rewarded him. The Pope made him a Cardinal.—See *Voltaire's Age of Louis XIV. Chap. 33.*

Tellier

Tellier is no Excuse for these Proceedings: Zeal for the sound Doctrine ought not to make us resemble the Abettors of Error. I receive Compliment upon Compliment, but nothing assuages my Grief. I am now thoroughly sensible, that we are never more attached to this World, than when we are just ready to leave it. Pray to God to give me that Contempt of it, which so well becomes a Person of my Age.

LETTER CCXCVIII.

To Madam de Caylus.

March 17, 1718.

I Greatly disapprove of what has been done about the Letter of the Archbishop of *Rheims*. I likewise find great Fault with the Regulation concerning the Troops, and take upon me to draw bad Consequences from it. I never was so much taken up with great Affairs: 'Tis well-timed indeed! Will our Bishops do nothing to revenge the Affront the Episcopal Order has just received? Solitude now appears very melancholy to me. The Remembrance of past Times is Death to me; the present makes my Blood boil, and Futurity stagnates it. I am no longer able to write; I am now capable
of

of nothing but taking Rest, which is a sad Occupation. The Nun that lies over my Head is dying: They are actually giving her the Extreme Unction. Her Confessor, who is also mine, slept in as he was going up to her Room. He came into my Chamber to reconnoitre his Post.

L E T T E R C C X C V I I I

To Monsieur de Caylus

March 17, 1718

I Greatly approve of what has been done about the Letter of the Archbishop of Rheims

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C H A R A C

CHARACTERS.

ADVERTISEMENT of the *French* Editor.

I Imagined the Reader would with Pleasure peruse the following Characters. They are not all drawn by *Madam de Maintenon*: Those only of *Turenne*, *Conde*, *Colbert*, *Louvois*, *Madam de Longueville*, and the Duke of *Orleans*, belong to her: The rest are by another Hand. I don't know that they have yet appeared in Print. They are Fragments of Memoirs which *Madam de Maintenon*, and one of her female Friends, had wrote on the Reign of *Louis XIV.* and on such Events at Court as they had been Eye-Witnesses of. These Memoirs are yet extant; and if a Copy of them can be procured, the Publication of them may be depended on.

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The Prince of Condé,

Lived and died like a Hero. He had the Physiognomy of an Eagle. In his Youth he was a Fop: During the Civil Wars he followed Gallantry only to compass political Ends. A weak Friend, but an open Enemy. It is said that in the Field of Battle he had a languishing Eye. He was too fiery to spare the Soldiers; yet humane, and much beloved by the Troops. He protected and debased the Parliament. His Disgraces and Misfortunes always rendered him more haughty; and yet he was insolent in Prosperity. He despised the Coadjutor as sincerely, on account of his Licentiousness, as he hated *Mazarin* for getting him imprisoned. He tenderly loved his Son, and detested his Wife. In his Vengeance there is something that disgusts even those who esteem him. His aiming at the Crown of *Poland* did him Honour in *Paris*, and made him a little ridiculous at Court. The Conquest of *Franche-Comté* reinstated him in the King's Favour, who said in the Presence of *Barbesieux* and *Villeroy*, when he heard of his Death, *I have lost the greatest Man in my Kingdom.*

Madam

Madam de la Valiere.

THERE is not a more amiable Man than the King, nor did any Woman love him more tenderly than *Madam de la Valiere*. Her Heart was simple and pure, incapable of Fraud, Artifice and Meanness. I never knew a brighter Soul : She was formed for God. Mild and gentle, of an even Temper, and always in that languishing Disposition which charms a Lover; listening to nothing but the Dictates of her Heart; too much taken up with the King to mind her own Fortune, or that of her Relations and Friends.

M. de la Rochefoucault,

HAD a happy Physiognomy, a noble Air, much Wit and Judgment, and little Learning: He was intriguing, flexible, with great Fore-knowledge, and, as some have added, false. He was represented by many as having a bad Heart: If this be true, Retirement and Age must have mended his Character. I never knew a Friend more staunch and open-hearted, nor a better Counsellor in that Quality. He loved to be uppermost. Personal Courage seemed a Folly to him, and he could scarcely keep that Opinion to himself; nevertheless he was brave. He

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retained to his dying Day his lively and witty Humour, which was always entertaining, tho' he was naturally grave. His Son caused the Father's Faults to be forgotten, distinguished himself by his Talents, gained the Affection of many by his Politeness, and rose to a certain Degree of Favour at Court.

Madam de Montespan.

WAS both beautiful and pretty. The Passion the King had for her is the only Thing that could have tarnished his Glory, if any thing could impair the Splendor of the most brilliant Reign. *Madam de Montespan* had charming Eyes, childish Airs, and the finest Complexion in the World, even after bearing several Children: She had Wit, much Pride and Haughtiness. Never did any Mistress domineer more, and yet she was not fit for such a Station: She loved the King by Fits and Starts, and Money much more. Her Whims daily plunged the King into excessive and idle Expences. She did not love her Children, and she spoiled them.

The

The Duke of Vendome,

REsembled *Henry IV.* in many respects: Like him he was frank, liberal, hasty, without Spleen, Gall, Pride or Ostentation. He was too long left in Indolence and Inaction. The Soldiers called him Father. His Reputation rather than his Abilities beat the *Imperialists* in *Spain*. He had a Fund of Sloth and Indolence, a great share of Sense and some Knowledge of History. He would have the *Abbé de Chaulieu* write the History of his Campaigns. Though a bad Orator he spoke with Energy. He loved Pleasure too much, and was too indelicate in the Choice of his Companions: It seemed as if he imagined that his Presence was sufficient to endow a whole Assembly with Merit equal to his own.

The

The Dauphin,

HAD an excellent Heart, was a good Father, a dutiful Son, a tender Husband, and a sincere Friend. As a private Gentleman, he had been adored ; had he reigned, he would have perceived that all these Qualities were not fit for the Throne. His Manners were gentle ; he was quite void of Ambition ; and sincerely dreaded to survive the King.

Madam de Longueville,

WAS very beautiful, had great Wit, and died like a Saint. Her Youth was spent in the Intrigues of the Civil Wars, in which she behaved with more Art than Wisdom. God touched her Heart, and she unfortunately fell into the Hands of the Jansenists, whom she favoured. She led a very austere Life ; her Devotion was always severe, but never ridiculous ; and though naturally of a tender Constitution, would always stand, by way of Mortification. 'Tis pretended that she died of a Decay, occasioned by denying herself sufficient Nourishment.

Marshal Turenne,

ONE of the greatest Men of the Age. As his Eye-brows met, his Aspect was bad, and very deceitful : More Mildness, Benignity and Humanity were never found in any Man. Though he was lofty, yet he knew how to be extremely modest. He was a Stranger to Self-Interest, whether in great or small Matters, and did not even know his own Circumstances. He committed a Fault in imparting to his Nephew the Cardinal *de Bouillon*, what he ought not to have trusted him with. Another Error may be placed to his Account, and that was, revealing an Affair of great Importance to a young Lady whom he loved. But why should we seek Faults where there are so many Virtues to be admired ? He was always compared to the Prince of *Condé*. Without deciding in favour of either, the Prince's Valour was more conspicuous, and that of *M. Turenne* more prudent. He was a Stranger to every Vice. The King used his utmost Endeavours to convert him. He was convinced long before he abjured : He deferred that Moment, lest it should be thought that he abjured out of Complaisance to the King. He was an Eye-witness of the Miracle that happen'd at the Louvre :

Louvre : A Fire having broke out in the Gallery, and threatening a terrible Conflagration, the Host was brought near, and the Fire went out : Upon which he could not help saying, *I have seen it, and cannot doubt of it.*

Monsieur Colbert,

Restored the Finances, which the Prodigality of *Fouquet* and the Avarice of *Mazarin* had greatly disordered. He was the Patron of every Man that distinguished himself by any Merit or Talent. He encouraged Commerce. He was hated, on Account of his being harsh and cool. He was modest, and yet weak enough to give himself out for a Gentleman. He was extolled after his Death ; but his greatest Elogium is to be found in the Conduct of all his Successors. The Vexations he met with from *M. de Louvois*, who made the King launch out into all Sorts of Expences, shortened his Days. He raised his Family too high ; but it is certain that his Family served the King well.

The Marquess de Louvois,

WAS a Man of great Parts, indefatigable, versed in the lowest Branches of Business, of profound Secrecy, prying into every Thing, and wanting to know even the most common Handicrafts. He was rough and severe, attached to the King and to the State, but so presumptuous and contradicting, that he thereby became intolerable to his Master. He had a quick Conception of Things, formed his Plan speedily, and executed it as readily. The Military Men were very much divided in their Opinions of him: He was almost as much beloved as he was hated. His constant Error was, that he always hindered Marshal *Turenne* from pushing his Conquests. Without Wars he could not have kept his Post, and he was sensible of it: After his Death his Heart was found uncommonly contracted; which shewed that he died of Grief; others said he was poison'd.

The Prince of Conti,

HAD great Talents both natural and acquired, a magnanimous Air, an awful Manner of speaking, with a noble and easy Carriage. He was versed in the Art of War, and had Courage. Gratitude was none of his Virtues: Had he known how to bend, he had been King of Poland. The King was not sorry that he aimed at that Crown, and would have been concerned if he had attained it. In his Way of thinking there was more Wisdom than Ambition. He spoke very gracefully, and wrote well. He committed a great Fault in betraying a Kind of Contempt and Hatred of the Jesuits: He was suspected of adopting the new Opinions; but he raised himself above those Suspicions; so that the King did not esteem him less; but he could never love him.

Marshal Luxembourg,

WAS brave, and Master of his Profession ; but he so ill improved his Advantages, that one would have been apt to think he conquered rather by Inspiration than by his Abilities. He had something sinister in his Countenance, but the Prejudice conceived from it wore off after a little Acquaintance with him. He was the personal Enemy of *Louvois*, who gave him the utmost Provocation ; He revenged himself on his Enemies at Home only by his Victories. When in Prison, he vowed their Destruction ; the Moment he was set at Liberty, he ran to embrace them, and forgave them. Such as accused him of magical Arts ought to be accused of Credulity ; and those who thought him guilty of poisoning, are at least guilty of Malice. He was pious towards the End of his Life. He was fond of being compared with *Turenne*, and laughed when he heard *Condé* compared to that great Man.

The Duke of Orleans,

IS a Man of great Parts. His Morals are not irreproachable. His Popularity has won him the Hearts of the Army and the People. He is a Lover of Arts and Sciences, and has made some Proficiency in them. His Debauches made him lose the King's Esteem: M. d'Argenson greatly contributed to his Elevation. He is more ambitious than a Subject ought to be; but the Blood he is descended from accounts for it.

Madam de Fiesque,

KNEW the Court, and was not known there. She concealed the deepest rooted Vanity under the Appearances of the severest Humility. Her Heart was so tender and indulgent, that it bordered upon Weakness. She was once handsome, and would have been very glad to have had it always remembered.

M. de Barbezieux,

HAD neither the Qualities of a Statesman,
nor the Virtues of a Christian, nor the
Manners of a well-bred Man.

Father la Chaise,

HAD good Sense and an upright Heart. His
Morality was as pure as his Manners. He
was nevertheless accused, with some Founda-
tion, of not having always been so severe. It
was a superficial Knowledge of Medals that
made the King take a Liking to him. His Me-
ridian was brilliant, but his Beginning and his
End were not answerable to it. As he was of a
very pliant Temper, he was envied by many,
and yet had but few Enemies.

Madam

Madam de Fontanges,

WAS great in every thing; magnificent, prodigal, lofty; a Contrast to *la Valière*. The Splendor of Favour affected her more than the Pleasure attending it. There was something majestic in her Beauty. Her Imagination carried her to every Thing that was grand and elegant. The King loved her passionately, doubtless on Account of the Similitude of Character; but his Love did not last long, because she wanted Wit.

The Dauphiness,

WAS very devout, but Piety did not cure her of, her odd, whimsical Ways: She was haughty and distrustful; and the Ladies that attended her suffered a great deal in the last Months of her Life. The Dauphin would have loved her, had she been pleased to permit it.

M. de

M. de Harlai, Archbishop of Paris,

WAS never liked by the King! He was very zealous, but his Zeal was harsh; His Ambition, like his Genius, knew no Bounds. He attacked Heresies rather to curry Favour at Court, than for the Sake of Truth. Had he been as great a Man as he imagined himself to be, his Passion for Women was sufficient to stain his Glory. This Irregularity was so notorious, that it could not but give the King a Disgust to the making any Use of him. *Madam de L* made him commit many Faults, and procured him no Comfort for his Disgraces.

The Marquess de Seignelai,*

WAS capable of governing the State, and incapable of managing his domestic Affairs. Never did any Son less resemble a Father: He had none of his Principles, though he had been long employed under him. He differed from *Louvois* in that his Views reached to the most distant Objects, whereas *Louvois* was intent only on the nearest. He aimed at being a Philosopher, a Minister, and a Soldier; and this Whim of excelling in every thing, procured

* Son of *Colbert*.

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him great Success and a great deal of Ridicule. He was active, vigilant, upright, and loved the State still more than the King. His Debauches shortened his Days. He died poor, but it was through his own Fault.

Louis XIV,

HAD no other Defects than those of his Education. In Youth he was the most amiable Man in his Kingdom; in old Age the best Christian in it. Adversity did not shake him. He got the better of all his Passions, except his Taste for Magnificence. He loved all those that served him punctually and heartily. He hated Calumniators, Slanderers, and impious Men. He was very reserved, yet very sincere.

Marshal Catinat.

FEW Men knew him, because he was not fond of being communicative. At Court he was not relished: His outward Carriage discovered nothing of the great Man in him. He was hardly known in *Paris*: In the Army he was adored. No Man ever had fewer Friends; but those were remarkable for a Zeal and an Admiration.

admiration which are seldom found in Friendship: When he was out of Employment, it used to be said of him, that he was capable of executing any thing. He raised himself without caballing; He never founded his own Praise: He scorned to ward off any Blow, which envious Persons, for he had no Enemies, aimed at him. He died calmly, fearing nothing, hoping for nothing, and perhaps believing nothing. His Merit was natural; it cost him nothing; and accordingly, he was above Honours. Though he was charged with Irreligion, he was not accused of any Vice.

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